

# Policy & Practice

10TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

This publication is a special commemorative, tenth anniversary collection of the most cited articles to have been published in the Centre for Global Education's bi-annual, peer reviewed, online journal *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*. The journal aims to celebrate and promote good practice in development education, inform the work of practitioners, and support dialogical exchange between educators throughout the island of Ireland and between the global North and South. Over the past decade, *Policy and Practice* has become an articulate vehicle for debating inequalities within and between the global North and South, and for encouraging active engagement with the issues underpinning poverty and injustice. This special collection carries articles by leading scholars in the field who debate issues on the cutting edge of development education practice and the policy environment in which it is delivered. *Policy and Practice* debates and affirms the transformative capacity of education to create a more just and equal world.

"This special issue of *Policy and Practice* provides an outstanding view of the state of the field of development education from a range of excellent scholars and practitioners. Once again, this journal demonstrates its success in supporting educators' understanding of the contested areas and edges of development education theory and practice in many parts of the world".

Lynette Shultz, Associate Dean, International Education & Director, Centre for Global Citizenship Education and Research, University of Alberta.

"*Policy and Practice* is indispensable to the development education sector in the island of Ireland. It has enhanced the sector's academic credibility and, at the same time, become very effective in meeting the needs of practitioners both locally and globally".

Gerard McCann, Senior Lecturer in European Studies,  
St Mary's University College, Belfast.

*Policy and Practice* is funded by Irish Aid



Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review

EDITED BY STEPHEN MCCLOSKEY

# Policy & Practice

## A Development Education Review

TENTH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



EDITED BY  
STEPHEN MCCLOSKEY





# Policy & Practice

A Development Education Review



Edited by:  
Stephen McCloskey

Editorial matter, selection, introduction @ Stephen McCloskey, 2015  
All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

No portion of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save with written permission or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, Saffron House, 6-10 Kirby Street, London, EC1N 8TS.

Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

The authors have asserted their rights to be identified as the authors of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

First published 2015 by CENTRE FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION

ISSN: 1748-135X  
Editor: Stephen McCloskey  
Printed by: GPS Colour Graphics

“The views expressed herein are those of individual authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of Irish Aid”

© Centre for Global Education, March 2015

The Centre for Global Education is accepted as a charity by Inland Revenue under reference number XR73713 and is a Company Limited by Guarantee Number 2529

# CONTENTS

|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| <i>Notes on Authors</i>      | 1  |
| <i>List of Abbreviations</i> | 7  |
| <i>Acknowledgments</i>       | 12 |

## INTRODUCTION

|                                                                                                             |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Discourses on Development Education: <i>Policy and Practice</i><br>Ten Years On<br><i>Stephen McCloskey</i> | 13 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

## SECTION ONE:

### DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION DISCOURSES AND PRACTICES

|                                                                                                                                               |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Discourses and Practices around Development Education:<br>From Learning about Development to Critical Global Pedagogy<br><i>Douglas Bourn</i> | 32 |
| Critical Literacy: Theories and Practices in Development Education<br><i>Vanessa de Oliveira Andreotti</i>                                    | 47 |
| Development Education and Research at Third Level in Ireland<br><i>Su-ming Khoo, Kelly Coate and Carol Wrenn</i>                              | 62 |
| Globalising Higher Education: Challenges and Contradictions<br><i>Niamh Gaynor</i>                                                            | 76 |
| Micro-Development Initiatives and the Potential Role for<br>Higher Education Institutions<br><i>Gerard McCann</i>                             | 83 |

## SECTION TWO:

### DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

|                                                                                                                                                        |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| A Perspective on the Relationship between Development<br>Education and Education for Sustainable Development<br><i>Deirdre Hogan and Roland Tormey</i> | 99  |
| Development Education and Education for Sustainable<br>Development: Are they Striking a Faustian Bargain?<br><i>David Selby and Fumiyo Kagawa</i>      | 110 |
| Education for Sustainability: Challenges and Opportunities<br><i>Ros Wade</i>                                                                          | 125 |
| Sustainable Education - Towards a Deep Learning Response to<br>Unsustainability<br><i>Stephen Sterling</i>                                             | 143 |

### SECTION THREE: DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH

|                                                                                                                                            |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Structural Constraints to Global South Actor Involvement<br>in Development Education in Ireland<br><i>Son Gyoh</i>                         | 149 |
| Media representations of Africa: Still the Same Old Story?<br><i>Michael Mahadeo and Joe McKinney</i>                                      | 156 |
| From Debt Audits to Debt Justice: Drawing Lessons from<br>the Global South in Development Education in Ireland<br><i>Nessa Ni Chasaide</i> | 163 |
| Economic Alternatives for Gender and Social Justice:<br>Voices and Visions from Latin America<br><i>Patricia Muñoz Cabrera</i>             | 175 |

### SECTION FOUR: THE POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

|                                                                                                                           |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Another Cog in the Anti-Politics Machine?<br>The 'De-Clawing' of Development Education<br><i>Audrey Bryan</i>             | 195 |
| The Elephant in the Room: Toward a Discourse on<br>Development Education and Corporate Power<br><i>Andy Egan</i>          | 207 |
| Putting the Politics Back In: Radical Education<br>and Action in the Cause of Social Justice<br><i>John Hilary</i>        | 223 |
| Call to Action: A European Development Education Strategy<br><i>Rilli Lappalainen</i>                                     | 238 |
| Rising to the Challenge: Development Education,<br>NGOs and the Urgent Need for Social Change<br><i>Stephen McCloskey</i> | 246 |
| One World: Why Development Educators Should<br>Court Controversy at Home<br><i>Andy Storey</i>                            | 260 |
| Appendix 1: Centre for Global Education                                                                                   | 267 |
| Appendix 2: Editorial Group and International Editorial Board members                                                     | 269 |

## NOTES ON AUTHORS

**Douglas Bourn** is Director of the Development Education Research Centre at the Institute of Education, University of London and editor of the *International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning*. He is author of numerous articles and books on development education and related areas such as global citizenship, education for sustainable development and global perspectives in education. His main publications in recent years have included: *The Theory and Practice of Development Education: A pedagogy for global social justice* (Routledge, 2015); an edited volume on *Development Education: Debates and Dialogues* (2008); a chapter on development education in *The Routledge Companion to Education* (2012); and a series of research reports on development education and global learning within schools published by his Research Centre at [www.ioe.ac.uk/derc](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/derc). Prior to being Director of the Research Centre, Dr. Bourn was Director of the Development Education Association (now renamed as Think Global). Contact: [d.bourn@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:d.bourn@ioe.ac.uk)

**Audrey Bryan** holds a PhD in Comparative-International Education, with an academic specialisation in Sociology. She teaches courses in Sociology across the range of programme offerings on the Humanities and Education degrees at St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra. She has published nationally and internationally in the areas of racism and anti-racism, gender and sexuality studies, development studies and citizenship education. She is the co-author (with Meliosa Bracken) of *Learning to Read the World? Teaching and Learning about Global Citizenship and International Development in Post-Primary Schools* (2011, Irish Aid).

**Kelly Coate** is the Director of the King's Learning Institute, King's College London. She previously was a Lecturer in Higher Education at the National University of Ireland, Galway, and a lecturer and researcher at the UCL Institute of Education. She is on the Governing Council of the Society for Research in Higher Education and has published on topics such as the higher education curriculum, gender and internationalisation.

**Vanessa de Oliveira Andreotti** is Canada Research Chair in Race, Inequalities and Global Change, at the Department of Educational Studies, University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. She has extensive experience working across sectors internationally in areas of education related to international development, global citizenship, indigeneity and social accountability. Her work combines poststructuralist and postcolonial concerns in examining educational discourses and designing viable pedagogical pathways to address problematic patterns of international engagements, flows and representations of inequality and difference in education. Many of her publications are available at: <https://ubc.academia.edu/VanessadeOliveiraAndreotti>.

**Andy Egan** is Director of Symbio Development Consultancy and has a background in development education, community development, equalities and campaigning for local and global social justice. Andy led the Global School Partnerships programme at British Council before moving to People & Planet as Director. He has co-authored teaching and learning materials for schools in the UK and African countries on the environment, health, global poverty, education, gender and global partnerships. Andy holds an MA in Development Education.

**Niamh Gaynor** is a political sociologist specialising in the politics of inequality and development, citizen participation and democracy, and evolving forms of governance, both formal and informal. She was awarded her PhD from NUI Maynooth in 2008 and has worked in Dublin City University (DCU) since that time. Previously she worked in international and community development in Africa and Ireland. Niamh has a particular interest in how social and political inequalities come to be produced and reproduced and her research to date has focused on exploring the conditions under which more marginalised groups and communities wield an influence at local and national levels.

**Son Gyoh** is an independent resource person in Development Education. He holds an MSc in Development Management and professional certificates in management level Strategic planning. He has particular interest in institutional development and has presented a number of policy review papers on New Community integration. His interest in development education focuses on mainstreaming global South perspectives in early school teaching resources, improving regional impact of new community DE actors and approaches to global South linkages. He is a co-founder and the Project development executive of 'Awareness for development' a new community based organisation involved in project collaboration and community level networking among migrant-led groups in the West of Ireland. He is a regular contributor to local newspapers in global South perspective columns and feature articles in development education. He is also a member of the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) and resides in Galway.

**John Hilary** is Executive Director of War on Want and author of *The Poverty of Capitalism: Economic Meltdown and the Struggle for What Comes Next* (London: Pluto Press, 2013). He has worked for the past 25 years in the field of international development and human rights, and is one of the founder members of the Progressive Development Forum.

**Deirdre Hogan** is an Educational Researcher at the University of Limerick. She is coordinator of the Ubuntu Network, an Irish Aid funded programme

that supports the integration of development education into initial post-primary teacher education in Ireland. Her research interests include Education for Sustainable Development in the teaching of science, and Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Education in Initial Teacher Education.

**Fumiyo Kagawa** is Research Director of Sustainability Frontiers, a not-for-profit international organization with offices in Canada and the United Kingdom. (<http://www.sustainabilityfrontiers.org/>). Her expertise includes holistic and transformative theory and practice in global education, emergency education, disaster risk reduction education, climate change education and sustainability-related education. She has engaged in a number of pedagogical and educational change research and innovation initiatives in different cultural contexts including within Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa, Vanuatu and the Central and Southeast Asian countries.

**Su-ming Khoo** is a Lecturer in the School of Political Science and Sociology and Vice-Dean (Internationalisation) for the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies, at the National University of Ireland, Galway. Her research and teaching explore connections between human rights, development and culture, particularly through the rights to education, food and health, and from postcolonial perspectives. Her recent research examines public goods, global health justice and solidarities, human development, alternative economics and sustainability. Her research and teaching emphasise public and engaged scholarship and activism, critically interrogating the role of higher education and research in knowledge societies.

**Rilli Lappalainen** is the Secretary General of Kehys, the Finnish NGDO platform to the EU, board member of CONCORD, and co-chair of the European Development Education Multi-Stakeholder Group.

**Michael Mahadeo** is a Lecturer in Sociology in the University of Ulster at Magee Campus. He has taught extensively at both further education and university levels since October 1991. Michael's teaching has covered both Humanities and the Social Sciences, and he specialises in issues of globalisation, socio-economic development, identity and the mass media. He is currently working on research covering identity relating to media discourses; issues of the growing diversity in Irish society and what this can mean for community development/work. Michael also teaches on the Open University's Introduction to Social Sciences course.

**Gerard McCann** is senior lecturer in International Studies at St. Mary's University College, Belfast. He has lectured at universities in Memphis, Cork, Seattle, Lusaka, Kosice and Paderborn. He was academic manager

of the Department for International Development (2005-2008) and Trocaire (2008-2010) funded 'Global Dimension in Education Project'. He is the co-ordinator of a partnership programme with the University of Zambia and a member of the University Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES). He specialises in the European Union's economic and development policies; EU policy in Ireland; and development education.

**Stephen McCloskey** is Director of the Centre for Global Education, a development non-governmental organisation based in Belfast. He is editor of *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*, a peer reviewed, open access journal. His publications include: *Development Education in Policy and Practice* (editor, Palgrave, 2014); *From the Local to the Global: Key Issues in Development Studies* (Pluto Press, 2009) co-edited with Gerard McCann; and *The East Timor Question: The Struggle for Independence from Indonesia* (I B Tauris, 2000) co-edited with Paul Hainsworth. He is engaged in activism on Cuba and Palestine and is currently managing education projects in the Gaza Strip.

**Joe McKinney** is a lecturer in Media Production at Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC). He has special responsibility for the introduction of high definition television and professional practice in the HND curriculum.

**Ronaldo Munck** is Head of Civic Engagement at Dublin City University and visiting Professor of Latin American Studies at the University of Liverpool. He has written widely on development, migration and development issues and is author of the recent *Contemporary Latin America* (Palgrave, 2012). He is chair of the Development Studies Association of Ireland ([www.dsairland.org](http://www.dsairland.org)) and editor of the journal *Latin American Perspectives* (<http://lap.sagepub.com/>).

**Patricia Muñoz Cabrera** is a gender & development researcher and global consultant. She began working in the field of development cooperation in 1995, with specific focus on sustainable trade, livelihoods and poverty reduction policies. Between 1997 and 2005, she worked for Oxfam. Until December 2011, she was Chairperson of WIDE, a Europe-based international network working on gender justice in trade and development policies. Presently, she specialises in intersectional gender analysis of trade and development policies, and is currently doing research on impact of extractive industries on women's economic, cultural and social rights.

**Nessa Ní Chasaide** is Coordinator of Debt and Development Coalition Ireland (DDCI) (see <http://www.debtireland.org/>), a global, financial justice organisation which campaigns on debt and tax issues. Nessa has been working in the global justice sector for over 15 years. Her involvement in

global justice activism began as a student at University College Dublin. On leaving UCD she worked with Trócaire in Dublin and Kenya for over five years. She has been the Co-ordinator of DDCI since August 2006, campaigning for an end to the financial exploitation of impoverished countries, in particular through campaigning for debt cancellation and an end to unjust resource flows from the South to the North.

**David Selby** is Founding Director of Sustainability Frontiers, a not-for-profit international organization with offices in Canada and the United Kingdom. He works principally in the fields of climate change education, disaster risk reduction education and education for sustainability. He co-edited, with Fumiyo Kagawa, *Education and Climate Change: Living and Learning in Interesting Times* (Routledge, New York, 2010), the first comprehensive academic treatment of climate change education. His most recent book, again edited with Fumiyo Kagawa, is *Sustainability Frontiers: Transformative Voices from the Borderlands of Sustainability Education* (Barbara Budrich, Leverkusen, 2015). Published outcomes of recent consultancy work with Fumiyo Kagawa have included: *Disaster Risk Reduction in School Curricula: Case Studies from Thirty Countries* (UNESCO/UNICEF, 2012) and *Climate Change in the Classroom: UNESCO Course for Secondary Teachers on Climate Change Education for Sustainable Development* (UNESCO, 2013). David is the co-author of the highly influential handbooks on global education, *Earthrights: Education as if the Planet Really Mattered* (1987), *Global Teacher, Global Learner* (1988), *Greenprints for Changing Schools* (1989), and *In the Global Classroom Book One and Book Two* (1999, 2000). With Fumiyo Kagawa and two other colleagues he was awarded the Canadian Peace Education Prize in 2003 for the post-9/11 secondary level manual used in schools across Canada, *Cultivating Peace in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. His other published work includes: *Weaving Connections: Educating for Peace, Social and Environmental Justice* (2000) and *Green Frontiers: Environmental Educators Dancing Away from Mechanism* (2008). For Sustainability Frontiers go to: <http://www.sustainabilityfrontiers.org/>.

**Stephen Sterling** is Professor of Sustainability Education, Centre for Sustainable Futures (CSF) at Plymouth University, and an advisor to the UK Higher Education Academy on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). He has worked as a consultant in environmental and sustainability education in the academic and NGO fields nationally and internationally for many years. He has been widely recognized for many years as one of the leading voices in sustainability education. His first book (co-edited with John Huckle) was *Education for Sustainability* (Earthscan, 1996), and was followed by the influential Schumacher Briefing *Sustainable Education – Re-visioning learning and change* (Green Books 2001). He also co-founded the first masters course in the UK on sustainability education (at London South Bank

University), and led the WWF project on systems thinking Linking Thinking - new perspectives on thinking and learning for sustainability.

**Andy Storey** is a lecturer at the School of Politics and International Relations, University College Dublin. He is a longstanding board member of Action from Ireland (Afri), and a campaigner for debt justice - for Ireland, Europe and the Global South.

**Roland Tormey** is coordinator of the Teaching Support Centre at the École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland. He previously worked at the University of Limerick where, among other roles, he was Head of the Department of Education and Professional Studies. He also worked with the Irish National Council for Curriculum and Assessment where he developed curriculum materials on social and political education and on intercultural education. An author of half a dozen books, tens of chapters and more than twenty journal articles, he has worked in development education since the 1990s and has represented Ireland on a number of United Nations bodies on education for sustainable development.

**Ros Wade** is Reader in Education for Sustainability (EFS) at London South Bank University (LSBU) and programme co-director of the international EFS programme. She has been practising, researching and publishing in this area for over 15 years and sees herself as an academic activist, who is trying to link theory with practice. As Associate Director of the Centre for Cross Curricular Initiatives (CCC), she has been instrumental with Sally Inman in setting up the UK Initial Teacher Education ESD/Global Citizenship network.

**Carol Wrenn** is the Gender Equality Programme Advisor for Trocaire. She has a PhD in Anthropology from the National University of Ireland, Maynooth and an MSc in Development Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. She has ten years experience I'm working in local and international organisations on gender equality, gender based violence, policy and advocacy. Her research and areas of professional interest include women's rights, gender equality, gender based violence and international politics.

## ABBREVIATIONS

|         |                                                                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AAU     | Association of African Universities                                             |
| ACU     | Association of Commonwealth Universities                                        |
| ADC     | Asociación de Desarrollo Comunal                                                |
| AECID   | Agency for Spanish Cooperation                                                  |
| AFM     | Mercosur Feminist Network                                                       |
| AFrI    | Action from Ireland                                                             |
| AMB     | Brazilian Women's Organisation                                                  |
| AP      | Atlantic Philanthropies                                                         |
| BME     | Black and Minority Ethnic                                                       |
| BOAG    | British Overseas Aid Group                                                      |
| CAFOD   | Catholic Agency for Overseas Development                                        |
| CCC     | Centre for Cross Curricular Initiatives                                         |
| CDEC    | Cumbria Development Education Centre                                            |
| CEDAW   | Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women                    |
| CEE     | Council for Environmental Education                                             |
| CEO     | Chief Executive Officer                                                         |
| COI     | Central Office of Information                                                   |
| CONCORD | European Non-Governmental Organisation Confederation for Relief and Development |
| CONGOOD | Confederation of Non-Governmental Organisations for Overseas Development        |
| CSO     | Civil Society Organisation                                                      |
| DCI     | Development Co-operation Instrument                                             |
| DDCI    | Debt and Development Coalition Ireland                                          |
| DE      | Development Education                                                           |
| DEA     | Development Education Association                                               |
| DEAR    | Development Education & Awareness Raising                                       |
| DEC     | Development Education Centre                                                    |
| DECSY   | Development Education Centre South Yorkshire                                    |
| DEEEP   | Developing Europeans' Engagement for the Eradication of Global Poverty          |
| DERC    | Development Education Research Centre                                           |
| DERN    | Development Education and Research Network                                      |

|       |                                                                            |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DESD  | Decade of Education for Sustainable Development                            |
| DEVCO | Development and Cooperation                                                |
| DfES  | Department for Education and Skills                                        |
| DfID  | Department for International Development                                   |
| DG    | Directorate General                                                        |
| DICE  | Development and Intercultural Education                                    |
| DJA   | Debt Justice Action                                                        |
| DRC   | Democratic Republic of Congo                                               |
| EC    | European Commission                                                        |
| ECB   | European Central Bank                                                      |
| ECO   | Environmental Conservation Organisation                                    |
| EE    | Environmental Education                                                    |
| EENGO | Ecological Environmental Non-Government Organisations Network              |
| EFA   | Education for All                                                          |
| EfS   | Education for Sustainability                                               |
| EPSU  | European Federation of Public Service Union                                |
| ESD   | Education for Sustainable Development                                      |
| EU    | European Union                                                             |
| FDI   | Foreign Direct Investment                                                  |
| FIFA  | Fédération Internationale de Football Association                          |
| G7    | Group of Seven                                                             |
| G8    | Group of Eight                                                             |
| G20   | Group of Twenty                                                            |
| GDP   | Gross Domestic Product                                                     |
| GNI   | Gross National Income                                                      |
| HEA   | Higher Education Authority                                                 |
| HIVOS | International Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries |
| HND   | Higher National Diploma                                                    |
| HRB   | Health Research Board                                                      |
| IA    | Irish Aid                                                                  |
| IDEA  | Irish Development Education Association                                    |
| IDS   | Institute of Development Studies                                           |
| IEEP  | International Environmental Education Programme                            |

|        |                                                                |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| IFFI   | Instituto de Formación Femenina Integral                       |
| IFI    | International Financial Institution                            |
| IGTN   | International Gender and Trade Network                         |
| ILO    | International Labour Organisation                              |
| IMF    | International Monetary Fund                                    |
| INSET  | In-Service Training                                            |
| IOE    | Institute of Education                                         |
| IPAD   | Instituto Portugues de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento                |
| IRCHSS | Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences  |
| IRCSET | Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology |
| IT     | Information Technology                                         |
| JUNIC  | Joint United Nations Information Committee                     |
| LDCs   | Least Developed Countries                                      |
| LED    | Local Economic Development                                     |
| LSBU   | London South Bank University                                   |
| LSIS   | Learning and Skills Improvement Service                        |
| MA     | Master of Arts                                                 |
| MAI    | Multilateral Agreement on Investment                           |
| MDG    | Millennium Development Goals                                   |
| MEDCs  | Majority of More Economically Developed Countries              |
| MEP    | Member of the European Parliament                              |
| MFF    | Multiannual Financial Framework                                |
| MP     | Member of Parliament                                           |
| MPH    | Make Poverty History                                           |
| MSc    | Master of Science                                              |
| MSE    | Micro and Small Enterprise                                     |
| MST    | Movimento Sem Terra                                            |
| NCC    | National Competitiveness Council                               |
| NCCA   | National Council for Curriculum and Assessment                 |
| NCVO   | National Council for Voluntary Organisations                   |
| NDP    | National Development Plan                                      |
| NEAD   | Norwich Education and Action for Development                   |
| NEPAD  | New Partnership for Africa's Development                       |

|        |                                                                  |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| NESC   | National Economic and Social Council                             |
| NFER   | National Foundation for Educational Research                     |
| NGO    | Non- Governmental Organisations                                  |
| NSA-LA | Non-State Actors and Local Authorities                           |
| NUI    | National University of Ireland                                   |
| ODA    | Overseas Development Assistance                                  |
| OECD   | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development           |
| OSDE   | Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry                             |
| P2P    | Poverty to Prosperity                                            |
| PCS    | Public and Commercial Services Union                             |
| PDF    | Progressive Development Forum                                    |
| PEDEC  | Powys Environment and Development Education Centre               |
| PRTL   | Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions               |
| RAE    | Research Assessment Exercise                                     |
| REMTE  | Network of Women Transforming Economy                            |
| REPEM  | Red de Educación Popular entre Mujeres                           |
| RIA    | Royal Irish Academy                                              |
| RISC   | Reading International Solidarity Centre                          |
| RSPB   | Royal Society for the Protection of Birds                        |
| SFI    | Science Foundation Ireland                                       |
| TNC    | Transnational Corporation                                        |
| TOE    | Through Other Eyes Initiative                                    |
| UCC    | University College Cork                                          |
| UCD    | University College Dublin                                        |
| UK     | United Kingdom                                                   |
| UN     | United Nations                                                   |
| UNCTAD | United Nations Conference on Trade and Development               |
| UNDP   | United Nations Development Programme                             |
| UNECE  | United Nations Economic Commission for Europe                    |
| UNEP   | United Nations Environment Programme                             |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund                                   |
| US     | United States                                                    |

|      |                                                 |
|------|-------------------------------------------------|
| WCED | World Commission on Environment and Development |
| WDM  | World Development Movement                      |
| WIDE | Women in Development Europe                     |
| WSSD | World Summit on Sustainable Development         |
| WTO  | World Trade Organisation                        |
| WWF  | World Wildlife Fund                             |

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication is a special commemorative collection of articles published online in the Centre for Global Education's bi-annual, peer reviewed, open access journal *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*. To mark the journal's tenth anniversary, Irish Aid, the funder of *Policy and Practice*, commissioned a hard copy collection of the most cited articles published online over the past decade. Irish Aid is to be commended for recognising the need for a development education journal back in 2005 as a significant contributor to the capacity of the development education sector in Ireland. It should also be credited for staying the course with the journal despite the challenging funding environment for development education in recent years.

From the outset, both the Centre and I have had the support of a committed Editorial Group that has guided the publication of the journal and enabled it to reach impressive heights in terms of quality articles and international readership. More recently, an International Editorial Board comprising experienced and passionate education practitioners, has brought added expertise to the journal. The members of both bodies are listed in full in Appendix 2 and I thank them all unreservedly for their belief in the journal and huge contribution to its success.

I owe a great debt to Catherine Simmons and Jenna Coriddi, my predecessors as Editor of *Policy and Practice*, both of whom advanced the publication to new levels of authorship and readership. I also owe immense thanks to my colleagues in the Centre: Seán Byers, who has worked on the journal as a volunteer for four years; Giulia Maira, who worked extensively on the editing of this special collection; and Malte Hoberg, the Centre's Information Officer, who has greatly assisted the promotion of the journal to new readers. Finally, I thank the Centre's Management Board for giving so much of their time to support the staff and our work.

Stephen McCloskey,  
March 2015

## DISCOURSES ON DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION: POLICY AND PRACTICE TEN YEARS ON

Stephen McCloskey

This publication is a special commemorative collection of the most cited articles to have been published in the Centre for Global Education's bi-annual, peer reviewed, online journal *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*. The journal is celebrating its tenth anniversary and to mark the occasion, Irish Aid, the journal's funder, has commissioned a limited edition volume of articles previously only available online. Over the past decade, 20 issues of the journal have been published, each addressing a key aspect of development education (DE) policy and practice. The journal has aimed to:

“[C]elebrate and promote existing good practice in global education, inform the work of practitioners in development education and related adjectival education organisations, and to promote global education within the statutory education sector in Ireland” (<http://www.developmenteducationreview.com/>).

In a comparatively small and somewhat fragmented sector both within Ireland and also in the context of countries across Europe and North America, *Policy and Practice* has played an important role in facilitating dialogical exchange between DE practitioners. This exchange has importantly included enhanced sectoral links with, and learning from, the global South which is an essential component to DE practice aimed at addressing inequalities within and between the global North and South.

At a local level, *Policy and Practice* has played ‘a significant role in building the academic credibility and respectability of Development Education across Ireland’ according to an independent evaluation of the journal carried out in 2012 (Community Change, 2012). Back in 2007 when *Policy and Practice* was finding its stride, Douglas Bourn, a longstanding advocate for and practitioner of DE, suggested that the lack of an ‘independent research focus on DE’ meant that it had ‘minimal academic profile’ (2007: 31). He added that ‘[w]ithout published bodies of evidence and research it is likely that development education and related terms will remain on the margins of education thinking, policy-making and practice’ (2007: 33). The emergence of *Policy and Practice* therefore together with other journals (such as *Critical Literacy* and *International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning*) and the establishment of the Development Education Research Centre in the University of London by Douglas Bourn, have considerably enhanced the research base and practice of DE, particularly at third level. Journals and research bodies are essential to the process of supporting and sharing new

research, advancing new methodologies and concepts, and generally building sectoral capacity.

While undoubted progress has been made over the past decade in strengthening the academic base of DE and, at the same time, creating an enabling environment for DE practitioners in formal and informal education, there are still persistent challenges to its growth and long-term security. These challenges, as well as new opportunities for the sector, are considered in this article which reflects upon the key discourses in DE that have emerged from the ten years and 20 issues of *Policy and Practice*. I first turn to the origins and rationale of the journal that have shaped its content and development.

### **Rationale of *Policy and Practice***

In 2002, Dóchas, the Irish Association of Non-Government Development Organisations, commissioned research into ‘the current level of activity for Development Education in Ireland’ (2002: 7). The subsequent report compiled by Michael Kenny and Siobhan O’Malley, based on extensive consultation with over 150 organisations across the island of Ireland, found the sector’s greatest asset to be the ‘range, experience and commitment’ of its practitioners and its greatest challenge to be the ‘lack of a national strategic plan’ (2002: 7). The absence of a cohesive strategy for the sector was revealed in some capacity and communications deficits identified by the report such as: the inadequate promotion of development education (DE) practice locally and internationally; the lack of practice-driven networking opportunities, particularly between the north and south of Ireland; significant gaps in the delivery of DE in many regional parts of Ireland; weak inter-sectoral links between DE and other related ‘educations’; and the need for a stronger exchange of ideas between Ireland and the global South. The report’s recommendations included that ‘the development education sector take a leading role in instituting a model of “best practice” that promotes the highest standards in all aspects of development education work’ (2002: 8). It also urged DE stakeholders to: ‘promote a national and transnational inclusive dialogue on the nature and context of development education’ (Ibid); prioritise targeting the ‘third level sector’ (2002: 41); and build ‘capacity building programmes’.

In responding to the report’s perceived sectoral deficits, the Centre for Global Education proposed a three stranded capacity-building programme to Irish Aid, the sector’s leading funder and policy-maker. It comprised a national annual conference to facilitate dialogue and exchange among practitioners, bi-annual, participative, practice-driven workshops and, as its centre-piece, a peer reviewed, development education journal. The programme’s key aims included: strengthening sectoral links between the north and south of Ireland; enabling practitioners to debate the sectoral issues of regional and national concern raised by the Kenny /O’Malley report;

and enhancing dialogical exchange between practitioners in Ireland and the global South through the journal. Irish Aid proposed a feasibility study into the programme to gauge the level of interest among practitioners throughout Ireland and, with a resounding 'yes' from the sector, the programme was finally funded in 2004 for an initial period of three years. The first issue of the journal, titled *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*, was published in Autumn 2005 and the publication has since exceeded expectations in terms of readership, authorship and quality debate.

A 2010 external evaluation of the Centre's capacity-building programme by Sustainability Frontiers found that it was 'making a distinctive contribution to dialogue between development educators in the north and south of Ireland' and 'having a catalytic effect in overcoming the earlier silo ways of working that marked the development education sector' (Sustainability Frontiers, 2010: iv). In regard to the journal specifically, the evaluation report found '*Policy & Practice* to be the most effective project strand, the journal being regarded as indispensable to the development education sector in the island of Ireland' (2010: v). The report encouragingly found that the journal 'strikes a balance between academics and practitioners' and thus avoids becoming a 'highbrow, elite journal' speaking only to itself (2010: 21). It also maintains 'a fine balance between policy (advocacy) and practice' and is an 'inclusive journal'. Because of the 'flexibility of the structure', the reported added, 'there is unity and diversity; things work' (Ibid). For some DE practitioners, the journal's text heavy, 'academic-looking' presentational style went against the grain of DE practice and traditional resources which are more interactive and often stimulated by visual aids such as graphics and photographs. Reading a journal is a more solitary experience and not one readily suited to the DE interactive methodology.

It is unsurprising that the journal immediately prospered in its more natural environment of the tertiary sector where it could support academic teaching, be taken up as a research aid, and used to disseminate research through articles. Academic staff are more tested in the demands of journal article writing and the Research Excellence Framework (REF) requires that they publish articles in peer reviewed journals. However, the journal has managed to maintain an academic / practitioner balance in terms of contributors largely because it is published by a non-governmental organisation, the Centre for Global Education, rooted in DE practice. The CGE is well integrated into non-governmental development networks, which has assisted the dissemination of the journal to the DE practitioner base. Indeed, through strong organisational contacts in the development sector, the CGE has been in a position to encourage DE practitioners into journal writing which has strengthened their professional development and maintained the academic / practitioner balance in readers and contributors.

## Online Publication

However, the great leap forward for the journal in terms of readership came with the Editorial Group's decision in 2009 to move from a hard copy format to an online publication. This created multiple advantages for the journal: the entire archive could be made permanently available online; the cost of production was considerably reduced; new issues could be formatted and uploaded in-house; and visitors could read articles online and share the journal with learners without any associated cost. The printed editions from 2005-2009 had a very limited circulation because of postage and printing costs, and this was particularly problematic in sharing the journal with readers in other parts of Europe, North America and the global South. The online edition, now housed on a designated website ([www.developmenteducationreview.com](http://www.developmenteducationreview.com)), could be accessed by users around the world as the journal continued to be resourced by Irish Aid which ensured that the journal remained open access. The 2010 evaluation of the journal found that many readers continued to hanker after the hard copy format and there is no doubt that reading online can become a strain in extended sittings but the advantages to online publishing clearly outweighed the negatives.

The number of visitors to the *Policy and Practice* site in 2014 clearly demonstrated the value of online, open access publishing. The journal web site received 110,000 visitors between January and December 2014 from over 150 countries. Google Analytics showed that 91,505 or 83 percent of this total were unique visitors and 18,495 (17 percent) were return visitors (Google Analytics, 2014). The 2014 total of users represented a sharp increase of 21,871 (20 percent) on the number recorded for all of 2013 but perhaps most encouraging of all was that four of the top ten locations of users were countries in the global South (Ibid). The majority of users in 2014 were located in the following countries:

|                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| United States  | 17,065       |
| United Kingdom | 15,479       |
| Philippines    | 12,618       |
| India          | 7,831        |
| Australia      | 5,479        |
| Canada         | 4,243        |
| South Africa   | 2,984        |
| Ireland        | 2,799        |
| Netherlands    | 2,379        |
| Kenya          | 2,009 (Ibid) |

Open access publishing can be a great equalizer in terms of sharing resources and the electronic reach of *Policy and Practice* has surpassed all expectations. The next section turns to content and the dominant thematic threads that have emerged over the past decade.

## Development Education Discourses

A recurring theme in *Policy and Practice* over the past decade, but particularly in the aftermath of the 2008 international financial crisis, has concerned the role of DE within education provision and wider society. In the accelerated period of economic globalisation after the end of the Cold War in 1989 there has been growing concern at the increasing concentration of wealth in fewer hands. An Oxfam report published in January 2015 shows that a small elite (1 percent) controls nearly as much wealth as the bottom 50 percent of the world's population (Oxfam, 2015: 2). Moreover, if this trend continues, the top 1 percent will have more wealth than the remaining 99 percent in just two years (Ibid). This consolidation of wealth in fewer hands has been attended, according to Oxfam, by a spectacular growth in corporate power, given the capacity of companies in high growth sectors to 'spend millions of dollars every year on lobbying to create a policy environment that protects and enhances their interests further' (2015: 2). Oxfam regards the consequences of this poverty gap as 'corrosive for everyone'. A 2014 report argued that 'Extreme inequality corrupts politics, hinders economic growth and stifles social mobility. It fuels crime and even violent conflict. It squanders talent, thwarts potential and undermines the foundations of society' (2014: 4).

These are stark conclusions that should alarm the rich and poor alike and raise important questions about neoliberal economics, the growth model that has propelled and protected corporate power and created the '1 percent'. Dorothy Grace Guerrero defines neoliberalism as:

"a set of rules and mechanisms that encourages total freedom of movement for capital, goods and services by: eliminating barriers to encourage economic openness of international trade and investments; cutting social expenditure for social services; reducing government regulations that could diminish profits especially profits of transnational corporations; and privatisation of state-owned enterprises, goods and services to private investors" (2014: 232-233).

Grace Guerrero's description of the consequences of neoliberal globalisation chimes with those identified by Oxfam and include:

"increased poverty, conflicts, human insecurity, unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, dispossession, de-industrialisation of many developing countries and an increasing abandonment by governments of their responsibilities to provide even basic services to their people because of privatisation and deregulation" (2014: 233).

Governments and non-governmental development organisations (NGOs) alike agree that development education's remit is to challenge global poverty through enhanced understanding of development issues that will result in effective public action on the causes of inequality. Irish Aid, for example, states that the aim of DE is 'to deepen understanding of global poverty and encourage people towards action for a more just and equal world' (2007: 6). Similarly, the Development Awareness Raising and Education (DARE) Forum representing development NGOs across the European Union conceives of DE as enabling people:

"to move from basic awareness of international development priorities and sustainable human development, through understanding of the causes and effects of global issues to personal involvement and informed actions" (DARE, 2004).

Whilst there is apparent agreement across society on the need for awareness raising and public action on development issues, a question for the sector is to what extent should this learning and action focus on transformative agendas seeking alternatives to the growth-driven model? Or, alternatively, should it seek accommodation and traction within existing neoliberal structures and institutions? For example, in a formal sector policy context does DE pursue a reform agenda by enhancing the global learning opportunities for young people in the curriculum? Or does it pursue a more revolutionary 'root and branch' approach that regards the curriculum as hopelessly circumscribed by the growth agenda of neoliberalism with any reforms resulting in superficial change that confines DE to the margins. These contrasting approaches were best exemplified in a *Policy and Practice* exchange between Selby & Kagawa and Douglas Bourn in 2011. The former asked if DE and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) were 'in danger of striking a Faustian bargain so as to achieve some purchase and influence over educational directions, a bargain that brings short-term gains at the expense of transformative goals?' (2011: 15). Given their radical origins and remit for social change, Selby and Kagawa asked if there were signs within DE and ESD:

"of a compromising of values and trimming of original intentions and visions happening in the light of the global marketplace? And, if so, is that happening by commission, by oversight borne of sleeping immersion in current orthodoxies, or by studied omission?" (2011: 18).

In reviewing several policy and research documents published by prominent players in the DE sector in Europe, including the Development Education Research Centre, Selby & Kagawa found that 'explicit attention to issues of economic growth, neo-liberal globalisation and consumerism' were

‘barely mentioned, let alone problematised’ (2011: 19). In response, Bourn agreed that there was a lack of critical engagement with economic agendas in the NGO sector but argued that ‘there is a tendency to criticise without analysing why this is the case or reflecting on the skills and expertise within the development education communities of practice’ (2011: 12). Bourn urges:

“a constructivist approach to development education that tailors its social and educational interventions to the particular pedagogical perspectives being addressed. He suggests that within the sector there needs to be greater debate and research on how development education approaches can be relevant and most effective” (2011: 11).

Rather than regarding DE as a ‘monolithic approach’ to education, Bourn argues that it is ‘a pedagogy that opens minds to question, consider, reflect and above all challenge viewpoints about the wider world and to identify different ways to critique them’ (2011: 26). The debate between the ‘constructivist’ approach to DE articulated by Bourn and ‘transformative’ approach advocated by Selby and Kagawa has resonated in a series of articles on DE and sustainability which I turn to next.

### **Development Education and Sustainability**

The question of sustainability and DE’s relationship with other ‘adjectival’ educations such as ESD, Education for Sustainability (EfS) and Environment Education (EE) has regularly surface in *Policy and Practice* over the past decade. In 2008, the journal devoted an entire issue to ‘Education for Sustainable Development’ which raised the sometimes testy question of how DE fits into the sustainability agenda. Given their shared values, methodologies and common sustainability agenda, DE and EE should be natural bedfellows but as Hogan and Tormey (2008) suggest there have been disputes between the two sectors around territoriality in the context of ESD. By example, they highlighted DE and EE’s contested ownership of Education for Sustainable Development in strategic planning for the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) undertaken by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). This dispute developed into an ‘ideological battle for the soul and political capital of the ESD concept’ (Hogan and Tormey, 2008: 7) and while an accommodation was found the relationship remains a source of confusion and apprehension for advocates and professionals in the field’ (Hogan and Tormey, 2008: 6).

Despite the tensions that have sometimes strained the relationship between DE and EE, there has been an increasing awareness in both sectors of the need to develop more integrated models of joint working, particularly in the context of the ticking clock of climate change and its threat to sustainable livelihoods. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has described

climate change as ‘the single greatest threat to sustainable development’ (UN, 2013) and the *New Scientist* regards global warming as the ‘biggest global health threat’. Over the next century it says, ‘climate change will worsen virtually every health problem we know of, from heart disease and heatstroke to salmonella and insect-borne infectious diseases’ (2009). One of the key questions for educators is how do we address the crisis without disempowering learners given the enormity of the global challenges presented by economic growth powered by fossil fuels? Can we encourage individual behavioural change toward more environmentally friendly lifestyles, for example, when just 90 companies are responsible ‘for a whopping total of 63 percent of CO<sub>2</sub> and methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) emissions since 1751’ (Lohan, 2013). Moreover, in the strategy we adopt for advocacy on climate change do ‘we trim our agenda’, as Selby and Kagawa put it, ‘to have some say, sway and influence of a reformist nature within the prevailing climate’ (2011: 17). ‘By making nature secondary to the growth agenda’, say Selby and Kagawa, in return for ‘some, likely ephemeral, purchase on policy’, leading environmental advocates are ‘adopting an instrumental growth-speak lexicon in which nature is described as “natural capital”, “ecosystem services” and “natural resources” (2011: 17-18).

The climate justice agenda may in fact demand a new paradigm of education to challenge the unsustainable, high carbon patterns of consumption that have characterised the era of economic globalisation. Ros Wade argues for the adoption of Education for Sustainability (EfS), rather than the more ‘mainstream’ ESD as providing the critical thinking skills necessary ‘to critique the very Western-dominated discourse on development and to reflect an openness to alternative perspectives and radical viewpoints encompassed in education for sustainability’ (2008: 32). Wade sees EfS as offering wholesale change rather ‘than a modification of the existing paradigm’. ‘EfS’, she suggests, ‘could be regarded as possessing both the *process towards* and the *vision* of sustainability’ (ibid). Certainly, the scale of the climate change crisis seems to call for more radical measures and enforceable agreements than those adopted to date. According to the development agency CAFOD, the next 20 years will see 200 million people placed at risk of hunger if the planetary rise in temperature falls between 2-3 degrees (CAFOD, 2015). The majority of those most vulnerable to food and water shortages are living in the global South with Trócaire estimating that ‘two thirds of the world’s population (5.4 billion people) are likely to experience some kind of water stress’ by 2025 (Trócaire, 2015).

In December 2015, world leaders will meet at a UN Summit in Paris, to agree a global agreement on climate change. What is required according to Trócaire ‘is a legally binding agreement with strong and fair commitments from countries to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases’ (Ibid). DE and related sectors need to work together in advocating climate justice, particularly on behalf of those in the global South with the lightest

carbon footprint, who are paying the heaviest price for generations of carbon emissions that have attended industrialisation in the global North. As Naomi Klein suggests: ‘we can seize this existential crisis [of climate change] to transform our failed economic system and build something radically better’ (2014). The next section turns to the politics of DE and recent calls within *Policy and Practice* for development organisations to become more overtly political in their operations.

### The Politics of Development Education

The theoretical roots of DE lie in the pedagogy of Paulo Freire (1972) who regarded education as a socially transformative, empowering process both at an individual level and in wider society. He regarded education as a means toward altering unfair and exploitative social, cultural and economic relations through practice that combined reflection, analysis, debate and action. One of the challenges for development educators in the industrialised world over the past forty years, has been implementing Freire’s radical conception of education within contemporary practice. A recurring theme in the strands of *Policy and Practice*’s archive considered thus far has been the binaries emerging from the contrasting approaches to DE. We have, for example, the constructivist versus transformative approach to development discourse, the EfS versus ESD approach to sustainability, and we can add to this list the soft versus critical approach to citizenship education articulated in the journal by Vanessa Andreotti in 2006. According to Andreotti, ‘understanding global issues often requires learners to examine a complex web of cultural and material processes and contexts on local and global levels’ (2006: 40). This requires the ‘development of skills of critical engagement and reflexivity: the analysis and critique of the relationships among perspectives, language, power, social groups and social practices *by the learners*’ [italics in original] (2006: 49). By contrast, soft global education, lacking critical engagement, is more likely to tell learners what to think or do, perpetuate myths, and reproduce civilising ‘power relations’ with the global South.

Applying the ‘soft versus critical’ analysis to contemporary development practice, Audrey Bryan asked if the mainstreaming of development education through government funding and policy support had resulted in a ‘de-clawing’ of a sector ‘stripped of its radical underpinnings’ (2011: 1). She asked:

“Why the development education sector endorses, tacitly or otherwise, the very ideologies and political-economic arrangements that are responsible for producing or exacerbating conditions of poverty and injustice, while simultaneously encouraging people to take action against this poverty and injustice?” (Ibid).

Storey (2011) offered evidence of this ‘declawing’ in an Irish context when he drew attention to the muted response from the development non-governmental sector to the intervention in Ireland by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2010 following the spectacular collapse of the ‘Celtic Tiger’ economy post-2008. Given the IMF’s controversial and, some would suggest destructive, role in implementing structural adjustment programmes in developing countries (see for example Klein, 2008), Storey argued that ‘the development sector was well placed to provide some analysis and critique of the IMF’ (2011: 81). Essentially Bryan, Storey and other contributors to the journal (Egan, 2012; Hilary, 2013; Kirby, 2012; McCloskey, 2011) have argued that key stakeholders in the development sector should do more to connect the local to the global and use their knowledge of the global South and development issues to inform their activities in the global North. Rather than dodging debates on domestic policy issues, development NGOs should recognise that many industrialised societies are confronting neoliberal and austerity policies that have been foisted on many parts of the global South from the 1970s onward. As John Hilary suggested, the current recession offers a unique opportunity ‘to join up domestic struggles with those in other parts of the world’ (2013: 11).

Within Andreotti’s ‘soft versus critical’ paradigm, development NGO’s pursuing an aid-based advocacy programme based on saving the ‘other’ as part of an old colonial civilising mantra are locked into a soft citizenship template. Those NGOs engaged in exploratory dialogue on alternative paradigms of development informed by, and in partnership with, civil society movements in local and global contexts are more firmly rooted in critical global citizenship. This kind of critically engaged dialogue is more likely to result in sustainable action toward social change on the part of the learner and advocacy on the part of development NGOs. It will also reconnect DE with its natural constituency in civil society and radical origins in Freirean pedagogy.

The next section introduces the articles and structure of this special limited edition.

### **Structure and Articles**

The book has four sections, each addressing an area of dominant discourse in *Policy and Practice* over the past decade. Section one is titled ‘Development Education Discourses and Practices’ and considers the role of development education as a stimulus for critical approaches to thinking and practice in mainstream education. It begins with Douglas Bourn’s presentation of the constructivist approach to development education considered above. The second article in this section by Vanessa de Oliveira Andreotti reviews the idea of critical literacy in development education drawing upon the author’s academic and pedagogical practice in this area. She presents a ‘conceptual

cartography with four different “root” narratives as a critical literacy stimulus for dialogue and analyses that may open new possibilities of thinking and practice’. The author expands upon her earlier analysis of ‘soft versus critical global citizenship education’ presented in a highly valued 2006 *Policy and Practice* article (Andreotti, 2006). Another aspect of DE discourse and practice considered in this section is that of development education and research addressed by Su-ming Khoo, Kelly Coate and Carol Wrenn. The authors reflect upon the impact and contradictions brought about by an expansion of research activity in Ireland, particularly the tensions that result from the coupling of research with intensive teaching activities. While on the positive side research can result in ‘more informed audiences and activities’, it can also lead to new constraints and unintended outcomes as a result of funding sources that ‘favour a narrow, instrumental view of knowledge production’. These tensions continue to surface in academic practice and regularly recurred in *Policy and Practice* articles.

In ‘Globalising Higher Education: Challenges and Contradictions’, Niamh Gaynor discusses the impact of globalisation on higher education in Ireland including ‘the increasing corporatisation of management structures and practices’ together with ‘dwindling state support’. Her article raises important questions about the ‘nature and function’ of higher education ‘in an increasingly complex, globalised world’. She suggests that the neglect and marginalisation of development education at third level leaves students ‘ill-prepared to mediate, negotiate and challenge the increasingly complex, global society in which they live and work’. The final article in this section by Gerard McCann, considers the role of the university in the global North and South in nurturing micro-development economic initiatives that can foster alternative, sustainable models of development. The article specifically considers ‘community sourced initiatives’ that empower people to ‘shape their own cultural, social and economic environments’.

Section two of the book contains three articles that consider the relationship between development education and the environment education sector. This relationship has become increasingly important given the all-pervasive impact of climate change on the natural environment and populations suffering from shifting weather patterns, particularly poor, vulnerable countries in the global South. Deirdre Hogan and Roland Tormey consider the sometimes tense and uncertain relationship between DE and Education for Sustainable Development which manifested itself during the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014, DESD). The article argues that the commonalities between DE and ESD outweigh their differences, particularly their shared goal of developing ‘knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable the learner to critically engage with issues of injustice, inequality and unsustainability and to take positive action for change’. Hogan and Tormey suggest that any underlying tensions

can 'be addressed through open dialogue and collaboration while realising the immense potential of combining efforts in order to meaningfully address the complex and interrelated issues addressed by both fields'. David Selby and Fumiyo Kagawa offer a critical assessment of both DE and ESD, finding evidence in both sectors of a falling in with 'the neo-liberal marketplace agenda' which they equate to a 'Faustian bargain' that will result in likely short-term gains at the expense of their radical and transformative origins and goals.

The third article in this section by Ros Wade traces the emergence of the concept of Education for Sustainability (EfS) which, she argues, has the 'potential to generate an international movement for change'. The article draws upon the author's experiences of directing a Master's programme in EfS at London South Bank University which was, in part, inspired by the work of NGOs in providing 'training and awareness raising for educational practitioners' and carrying out 'advocacy and lobbying for policy change'. Wade sees EfS as offering a more radical and complex analysis of sustainability than the 'more mainstream concept of education for sustainable development (ESD)'. The article urges the more widespread take-up of EfS which Wade argues can 'become a dynamic process which can enable us all to learn to live sustainably'. Stephen Sterling teaches on the London South Bank University Education for Sustainability Programme and, like Wade, is critical of ESD as hiding 'an uncomfortable tension between accommodating and radical transformist approaches'. Sterling advocates the concept of "sustainable education", a term which suggests not just a simple "add-on" of sustainability concepts to some parts of the curriculum, but a cultural shift in the way we see education and learning'. Sterling is questioning the adequacy of education itself 'for the age we find ourselves in' suggesting that we need to pay deeper attention to the 'paradigms, policies, purposes and practices' intrinsic to education delivery. All of the articles in this section are reflecting to some extent on the adequacy of education to address the challenges of our consumerist, growth-driven society.

The radical origins of DE are found in the global South in the radical pedagogy of Brazilian educator, philosopher and activist Paulo Freire which has informed contemporary practice in the global North. Section three of the book considers the relationship between DE and the global South both in terms of the DE practice of minority ethnic groups in the global North and the learning opportunities available to development educators in the global South. Son Gyoh discusses the challenges faced by the minority ethnic sector in Ireland in fully participating in development education. They include the 'methodologies and conceptual framework' of DE not accommodating 'global South actor participation' and the absence of a 'theoretical framework' for the sector that makes it difficult to identify capacity deficits, including those relating to minority ethnic communities. The author draws upon his experience as a practitioner in the Irish DE sector and makes proposals that could make the

sector more inclusive of global South actors. The second article in this section by Michael Mahadeo and Joe McKinney explores media representations of the global South, particularly of Africa, which can often perpetuate negative stereotypes that undermine the work of development educators. The article emphasises the need for critical thinking skills that enable learners to challenge unfair, inaccurate and harmful images of and messages about the global South.

Nessa Ni Chasaide's article in this section highlights an important learning opportunity from the global South for Northern practitioners in the aftermath of Ireland's spectacular financial unravelling in 2008. Drawing upon the practice of countries in the South, including Ecuador and the Philippines, Ni Chasaide's organisation, the Debt and Development Coalition Ireland (DDCI) commissioned an audit into the legitimacy of the huge debt accumulated by the Irish government and passed on to its people when it fatefully decided to bailout Ireland's banks post-2008. The audit's findings outlined the extent of Ireland's financial liabilities arising from the debt crisis and questioned its legitimacy, prompting DDCI members to endorse the organisation's engagement in education and campaigning on Ireland's debt. This was a case of learning from the South supporting DE practice in the global North and Patricia Muñoz Cabrera, in her article, similarly offers lessons of alternative, progressive economic practice from the global South. She presents a series of case studies from across Latin America of alternatives to neoliberalism being put forward by feminist and women activists and scholars. Her article suggests 'that women are designing and implementing alternatives for sustainable economic development in local spaces and that these deserve serious consideration by national and international policymakers'.

Section four of the book discusses the politics of development education and the shifts in the policy environment for the sector in Ireland and across the European Union in the aftermath of the financial crisis. The articles collectively argue for a repositioning of the sector, on a more independent footing, to its more radical roots in order to meet the considerable challenges of neoliberalism manifested in cuts to public services, creeping corporatism and a widening income gap between rich and poor. Audrey Bryan, for example, considers a central paradox in DE practice where the sector appears to tacitly support 'the very ideologies and political-economic arrangements that are responsible for producing or exacerbating conditions of poverty and injustice'. Is this evidence, she asks, of a 'declawing' of the sector? Andy Egan, similarly, points to development education's neglect of the issue of growing corporate power in public life - the 'elephant in the room' - which threatens the increasing absorption of public services into private hands. He argues that this issue should be central to DE theory and practice but his own research suggests that it is on the margins of current DE discourse.

John Hilary's article suggests that this neglect of corporatism and the effects of neoliberalism may be in part the consequence of an increasingly professionalised NGO sector identifying international development with overseas aid rather than probing the deeper causes of poverty and injustice. By drawing on their privileged knowledge of the global South, Hilary suggests that NGOs could establish 'a continuity between the neoliberal economic policies visited on the peoples of South and North alike'. This in turn could foster action in greater solidarity between oppressed peoples in the North and South 'as part of a global fight against a common enemy'. A similar point is made by Andy Storey when he suggests that development NGOs in Ireland missed an opportunity to alert the Irish public to the effects of International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposed austerity measures when the Fund drew up an economic 'bailout' plan in 2010. It 'seemed obvious', says Storey, 'that the development sector was well placed to provide some analysis and critique of the IMF (and European Union (EU)) programme', particularly given 'the striking parallels between some of the more controversial IMF operations in the global South and the Irish intervention'. This opportunity to apply learning from the South to the Irish situation was not taken and the IMF's austerity measures have been implemented to the extent that a Tasc report in 2015 shows that inequality in Ireland has accelerated with 'a third of all income concentrated in the hands of the top 10 per cent of earners' (O'Brien, 2015).

Stephen McCloskey argues that development NGOs need to connect the local and the global in their practice by addressing poverty related issues at home as well as overseas, particularly when these issues are connected to the same tried and failed neoliberal economic model of development. He suggests that development education is pivotal to the process of involving the public in sustainable forms of engagement with poverty and justice issues. The NGO sector needs to move away from 'transactional' forms of interaction with the public that equate the development process with donations and 'giving' toward a more complex and critical interrogation of global issues that nurtures more sustainable forms of activism. This kind of active citizenship is to the fore in Rilli Lappalainen's article on DE policy in the European Union which is a significant player in influencing practice across the EU member states. Lappalainen traces the strengthening engagement with DE by EU institutions which is reflected most obviously in the DEEEP project which co-ordinates DE activities across Europe. However, the EU does not as yet have an explicit DE strategy for development education and Lappalainen argues that 'Adopting such a strategy in the EU would give a stronger position for DEAR [Development Education and Awareness Raising] in the member states and could be incorporated into national education plans'. He adds that a strategy could 'better support global civil society, enhance coordination, provide fiscal support and strengthen capacity building and joint learning'.

The contemplation of a development education strategy at a European Union level reflects how far the sector has come in a comparatively short period of time. The breadth and quality of perspectives that follow suggest that DE is a burgeoning sector which is reflected in the number of users of *Policy and Practice* and the rich vein of ideas and perspectives that are offered by journal authors. There is an overwhelming sense in these pages that development education has found renewed confidence and even greater relevance in the period following the 2008 crisis. Individuals and communities in the global North and South are seeking alternative, more sustainable forms of living based on the values that DE holds dear: interdependence, diversity, respect, sustainability and social justice. *Policy and Practice* and this special edition aim to augment the debate on how we can move closer to a society based on these values both locally and globally.

## References

Andreotti, V (2006) 'Soft versus critical global citizenship education', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 3, Autumn, pp. 40-51.

Bourn, D (2007) 'Building academic support for development education', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 5, Autumn, pp. 31-42.

Bourn, D (2011) 'Discourses and Practices around Development Education: From Learning about Development to Critical Global Pedagogy', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 13, Autumn, pp. 11-29.

Bryan, A (2011) 'Another cog in the anti-politics machine? The "de-clawing" of development education', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring, pp. 1-14.

CAFOD (2015) 'The Campaign', 20 January, available: <http://www.cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Other-Issues/The-Campaign>, (accessed 6 February 2015).

Community Change (2012) 'Review of Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review', Belfast: Centre for Global Education, available: [https://docs.google.com/a/centreforglobaleducation.com/file/d/0Bwa0-yj\\_NbZGX1ZJcEwwZ0M2czA/edit](https://docs.google.com/a/centreforglobaleducation.com/file/d/0Bwa0-yj_NbZGX1ZJcEwwZ0M2czA/edit) (accessed 3 February 2015).

*Critical Literacy: Theories and Practices*, available: <http://www.criticalliteracyjournal.org/> (accessed 3 February 2015).

DARE Forum (2004) 'Definition of Development Education', available: <http://www.deeep.org/dear-definitions.html>, (accessed 14 June 2013).

Freire, Paulo (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, London: Penguin Books.

Google Analytics (2014), 'Audience Overview for [www.developmenteducationreview.com](http://www.developmenteducationreview.com): 1 January to 31 December 2014', Belfast: Centre for Global Education.

Guerrero, Dorothy Grace (2014) 'The Deglobalisation Paradigm: A critical discourse on alternatives' in S McCloskey (ed.) *Development Education in Policy and Practice*, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Hilary, J (2013) 'Putting the Politics Back In: Radical Education and Action in the Cause of Social Justice', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 17, Autumn, pp. 9-26.

Hogan, D & Tormey, R (2008) 'A perspective on the relationship between development education and education for sustainable development', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 6, Spring, pp. 5-17.

*International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning*, available: <http://ioepress.co.uk/journals/international-journal-of-development-education-and-global-learning/>, (accessed 3 February 2015).

Irish Aid (2007) 'Development Education Strategy Plan 2007-2011', available: <https://www.irishaid.ie/media/irishaid/allwebsitemedia/20newsandpublications/publicationpdfsenglish/development-education-strategy-plan-2007-2011.pdf>, (accessed 6 February 2015).

Kenny, Michael and O'Malley, Siobhan (2002) 'Development Education in Ireland: Challenges and Opportunities for the Future', Dublin: Dóchas.

Kirby, P (2012) 'Educating for Paradigm Change', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 14, Spring, pp. 19-32

Klein, Naomi (2008) *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, London: Penguin.

Klein, Naomi (2014) *This Changes Everything: Capitalism v the Climate*, London and New York: Allen Lane.

Lohan, Tara (2013) 'The 10 Biggest Polluters of the Industrial Age', 21 November, available: <http://www.alternet.org/environment/10-biggest-polluters-industrial-age>, (accessed 6 February 2015).

McCloskey, S (2011) 'Rising to the challenge: Development education, NGOs and the urgent need for social change', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring, pp. 32-46.

*New Scientist* (2009) 'Climate change diagnosed as biggest global health threat', 14 May, available: <http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn17126-climate-change-diagnosed-as-biggest-global-health-threat.html#.VNSiA9KsWAg>, (accessed 6 February 2015).

O'Brien, Cal (2015) 'Ireland at risk of reaching US levels of income inequality, says study', *Irish Times*, 16 February 2015.

Oxfam (2014) 'Even it up: Time to end extreme inequality', available: <file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/Stephen/My%20Documents/Downloads/cr-even-it-up-extreme-inequality-291014-summ-en.pdf>, (accessed 6 February 2015).

Oxfam (2015) 'Wealth: Having it all and wanting more', available: [http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/ib-wealth-having-all-wanting-more-190115-en.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/ib-wealth-having-all-wanting-more-190115-en.pdf), (accessed 6 February 2015).

*Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*, Belfast: Centre for Global Education, available: <http://www.developmenteducationreview.com>, (accessed 4 February 2015).

Selby, D and Kagawa, F (2011) 'Development education and education for sustainable development: Are they striking a Faustian bargain?', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring, pp. 15-31.

Storey, A (2011) 'One World: Why Irish development educators should court controversy at home', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring, pp. 80-86.

Sustainability Frontiers (2012) 'Building Capacity in Development Education: Phase 2 Evaluation', Belfast: Centre for Global Education, available: [https://docs.google.com/a/centreforglobaleducation.com/file/d/0Bwa0-yj\\_NbZGYzI0MzllYWYtMmZhYy00MTQ4LWI3MWMtNmExZjVjOTUzNzky/edit?pli=1](https://docs.google.com/a/centreforglobaleducation.com/file/d/0Bwa0-yj_NbZGYzI0MzllYWYtMmZhYy00MTQ4LWI3MWMtNmExZjVjOTUzNzky/edit?pli=1), (accessed 4 February 2015).

Trócaire (2015) 'Climate Change', available: <http://www.trocaire.org/whatwedo/climate-change?gclid=COPv9PC2zcMCFU6WtAodi3YA4A>, (accessed 6 February 2015).

UN (2013) 'Climate change biggest threat to sustainable development', 22 October, available: <http://www.unric.org/en/latest-un-buzz/28783-un-secretary-general-climate-change-biggest-threat-to-sustainable-development>, (accessed 6 February 2015).

SECTION ONE:  
DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION DISCOURSES  
AND PRACTICES

## DISCOURSES AND PRACTICES AROUND DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION: FROM LEARNING ABOUT DEVELOPMENT TO CRITICAL GLOBAL PEDAGOGY

**Douglas Bourn**

### **Introduction**

Development education (DE) has been a feature of educational practice in most industrialised countries for the past 25 to 30 years. Central to much of that practice, where it has been led by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), has been the goal of educational and social transformation. Inspired by the ideas of Paulo Freire, development education has been seen by both its supporters and opponents as an approach towards learning that not only challenged dominant ideas in society but offered an alternative perspective and methodology (Bourn, 2008; McCollum, 1996).

*Policy and Practice* in recent issues has begun to address the extent to which development education is still radical and transformatory or has become accommodating to dominant social and political ideas. This is in part due to the influence of government funding, for example the Department for International Development (DfID) in the United Kingdom (UK), or to a failure to tackle and relate development education ideas to broader discourses in society, particularly recent economic developments (Selby and Kagawa, 2011; McCloskey, 2011).

This article, whilst noting these critiques, suggests that a constructive approach would be to reflect on the different interpretations of what development education is, to encourage the need for a closer relationship between theory and practice, and to undertake more research on how and what influences these forms of engagement within schools and further education. Research by the Development Education Research Centre (DERC) at the Institute of Education, University of London on schools (Bourn and Hunt, 2011) and further education (Bourn, 2008; Bentall, Blum and Bourn, 2009), for example, suggests that what is needed is to identify the particular pedagogical perspectives being addressed and then relate these to forms of social and educational interventions. Then clarify where and how development education approaches can be relevant and most effective.

### **What do we mean by Development Education?**

Selby and Kagawa (2011) imply that development education needs to be much more critical of dominant economic discourses. Whilst this author would agree that a weakness of practices of non-government organisations (NGOs) in the UK has been their failure to address economic agendas such

as corporate power (Egan, 2011), there is a tendency to criticise without analysing why this is the case or reflecting on the skills and expertise within the development education communities of practice.

A starting point in this article therefore is to look at what are the differing traditions and approaches of development education and how they relate to broader movements and perspectives for educational and social change. Firstly, development education practice in most industrialised countries emerged in response to the de-colonisation process. Secondly the vast majority of practice that has been promoted as development education has operated within the discourses, policies and funding of international development, whether from governments or international NGOs. This has meant that what has perhaps been missing from many of the debates in and around development education has been what is meant by development, and its relationship to global social change.

Some commentators on this area (Seitz, quoted in Hartmeyer, 2008) or NGOs such as Think Global, formerly the Development Education Association in the UK, suggest that the development concept is now outdated. Other bodies such as the Global Education Network Europe (O'Loughlin, 2006) and bodies in Canada (Mundy, 2007) argue that you cannot divorce talking about development from talking about globalisation, human rights or sustainable development; and that the term global education is more appropriate in bringing together all of these issue based or adjectival educations.

Yet in Europe, at least, there continues to be strong support for the concept of development education as exemplified by the 'European Consensus Document on Development', first agreed in 2005, which has support from a range of stakeholders across Europe. This document refers to development education as follows:

"The aim of development education and awareness raising is to enable every person in Europe to have life-long access to opportunities to be aware of and understand global development concerns and the local and personal relevance of those concerns, and to enact their rights and responsibilities as inhabitants of an interdependent and changing world by effecting change for a just and sustainable world" (European Consensus on Development, 2005: 5).

Whilst variations of this term can be seen in different national strategies across Europe and within the mission statements of NGOs, the term does reflect some common underlying principles that reflect how many academics and policy-makers would summarise what is perceived to be 'good development education'. They are as follows:

- Understanding the globalised world including links between our own lives and those of people throughout the world;
- Ethical foundations and goals including social justice, human rights and respect for others;
- Participatory and transformative learning processes with the emphasis on dialogue and experience;
- Developing competencies of critical self-reflection;
- Supportive active engagement;
- Active global citizenship (Rajacic et al., 2010: 121).

However it is suggested that these rather laudable goals and aims mask some wider divisions as to how development education is interpreted and could also be seen as little more than aspirations. What is suggested here is the need for a more critical and deeper analysis as to how development education is interpreted. It is this lack of analysis and critical reflection that can lead to comments about accommodation to dominant discourses or being too political.

### **Interpretations of Development Education**

If one reviews the landscape of development education in many European countries, the principles and themes outlined above could be said to summarise the aspirations of many NGOs. However if one reviews the detail of the practice a much more complex picture emerges. Recent reviews for the European Union (EU) (Rajacic et al., 2010) suggests that a great deal of educational practice is related to promoting or supporting aims of the government or NGOs or an emphasis on action and campaigning, with minimal attention given to deepening learning and understanding.

These observations are not new. Arnold (1988) in his critique of development education in the 1980s noted distinctions between those approaches that emphasised transmission of information, those that promoted critical skills and finally those that saw mobilisation as the priority. Alongside these approaches, Arnold also saw three visions that cut across these approaches: charity, interdependence and empowerment. Krause (2010) more recently, noted that aspects of these past approaches still exist. For him development education could be seen as:

- Public Relations for development aid;
- Awareness Raising - public dissemination of information;
- Global Education - focussing on local-global interdependence;
- Enhancement of Life Skills - focussing on learning process and critical thinking.

What is noticeable about the difference between Arnold and Krause is the

latter's recognition of one approach of seeing development education as closely linked to globalisation and global interdependence.

Whilst these categorisations have some value, it is suggested here that a much more complex picture exists if one looks at development education in a global context. The term, for example, is used in differing ways in South Africa (Hoppers, 2008) and India (Kumar, 2008). In the former, development education is seen as primarily about 'promoting indigenous knowledges'. Kumar, on the other hand, sees development education as fundamentally about dialogue and reflection, influenced by a critical humanist perspective in the Gandhian tradition. There are also approaches to development education that have a greater emphasis on: universal goals around global citizenship (Oxfam, 2006); more linkages with human development (Regan, 2006); and critical pedagogy, voices for the dispossessed and excluded (Andreotti, 2010).

Within the practices of organisations in many European countries for example, you see combinations of these differing influences and approaches. In the UK for example, several Development Education Centres (DECs) make reference to the influence of ideas on universal values around global justice as well as promoting critical thinking and voices of the dispossessed.

Behind these differing interpretations looms the influence of public funding, from either national government departments on international development or foreign affairs ministries. In the UK for example two interpretations of development education could be seen:

- Development Education as Development Awareness - based around building support for development, increased understanding and support for aid as exemplified by most governments who fund development education (DfID, 1998);
- Learning About Development - that essentially sees development education as knowledge and concepts around development including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as perceived by the Coalition government in the UK, and some International NGOs (CIO, 2011).

It is suggested in this article that there is the need for more debate, understanding and perhaps a deeper theoretical basis to some of these approaches. There is also the need to relate and develop these theories from a closer relation to practice.

Moreover there is a need to identify relevance of particular theories and approaches to educational environments. It is not about saying this is the right way or this is the wrong way. Rather, it is about recognising that these traditions and perspectives have different interpretations and goals. So, for example, a government funded programme on development education is very unlikely to see development education as about critical pedagogy. Also

if it is focussed on influencing the public in the North it is going to be less interested in seeing human development as education in a global context. Some grassroots NGOs however, whose *raison d'être* is about trying to change society, to question and challenge inequality in the world, are unlikely to accept an approach that is simply about learning about the Millennium Development Goals for example.

This however does not mean that an organisation engaged in development education practice merely responds to the funder agenda or the specific policy focus; what it means is that there is a need to debate and clarify how an organisation sees its contribution to broader policy goals and objectives. Marshall (2006), McCollum (1996) and Andreotti (2006) have suggested the need for development education to give greater consideration to theory. This does not mean ignoring funding priorities or goals. Andreotti, (with De Souza, 2008) for example, who has perhaps been one of the most influential writers on development education, developed a radical series of resources that have a strong post-colonial and Freirean background, with funding from the UK government.

The questions any NGO needs to consider in looking at the opportunity for taking forward their ideas through publicly funded programmes are:

- Does the funding enable the organisation to explore and develop its ideas and practices?
- Are there spaces for creativity and innovation?
- To what extent is there an opportunity for learning that might question or challenge dominant viewpoints and ideas?

What is summarised below are some examples from recent research by the Development Education Research Centre, all funded directly or indirectly by the UK government, which aim to demonstrate the different ways in which the principles and practices behind development education are being interpreted.

### **Engagement with Schools**

In most industrialised countries where development education has some status, it is because of its influence within schools. It would not be difficult to find examples of development education in a school in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Austria or Finland. This could take a variety of forms. Table 1 (overleaf) summarises some examples of engagement in schools identified from research with a number of secondary schools in England.

Table 1. Global Dimension engagement and activities across schools

|                                                  | Whole School Approach                                                                               | Curriculum                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Extra-curriculum                                                               | Professional Development                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mission Statements and strategies                | International strategy                                                                              | International Baccalaureate                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                |                                                                 |
| Staff member responsible for Global Dimension    | Advisor for International work and sustainable development.                                         | Curriculum advisor                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Global Awareness Club                                                          |                                                                 |
| School Assemblies                                | Speakers or talks on global poverty, climate change.                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                |                                                                 |
| International Partnerships                       | Long standing link with a particular school, promoted via whole school projects.                    | Using a link for specific curriculum projects e.g. water, climate change.                                                                                                                                                      | Involving local community and parents in raising money for partnerships.       | Teacher visits. Attending GSP training workshops.               |
| Work with local community groups                 |                                                                                                     | Local people from refugee communities giving talks in English, Geography or History.                                                                                                                                           | Cultural Festivals                                                             |                                                                 |
| Award programmes                                 | Fairtrade School. International School Award. Eco-School Award. UNICEF Rights and Responsibilities. | International School Award. UNICEF Rights and Responsibilities.                                                                                                                                                                | Eco-School Award                                                               | International School Award. UNICEF Rights and Responsibilities. |
| Working with NGOs or DEC or other similar bodies | Red Nose Day                                                                                        | Working with organisations such as Red Cross on curricular projects. Running sessions in the classroom e.g. Red Cross, Plan UK, Practical Action. Teachers within a school help an NGO or DEC to produce curriculum resources. | ActionAid's 'Send My Friend to School' programme.                              | Using local DE Centres for training sessions.                   |
| Pupil Based Initiatives                          | School Councils acting as focus for discussions and debates.                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Supporting external campaigns on themes such as fair trade and climate change. |                                                                 |

These examples by themselves tell us only about activities. As Edge et al (2009) in their research on secondary schools stated, the term global dimension, used in most English schools to promote the principles behind development education, has been interpreted in a variety of ways:

- Awareness of and exposure to other and different cultures and the world context; and a sense of global social responsibility;
- Helping students to understand that they are citizens of the world and to demonstrate the interconnectedness of the world we are living in;
- Teaching about global issues and understanding the impact of our actions;
- Promoting and sustaining international links;
- Understanding the bigger picture and their place in it;
- Helping students to link their complex and different identities and their place in the world.

Behind these different interpretations are the motivations of teachers that relate closely to perceptions of development education. The following observations from secondary schools teachers in England demonstrate first, a more charitable and development perspective; second, a more intercultural perspective; and third, a more critical approach:

“We’ve also got a link with a school/orphanage in Madagascar. That has really kind of opened people’s eyes as well, like when we’ve set up pen pal contacts. If our pupils haven’t received a letter recently and been complaining, we’ve told them there’s civil unrest there at the moment, all the ports are closed, there’s no import of food or fuel, not even any baby milk for the orphans” (Bourn and Hunt, 2011: 32-33).

“Because we want our pupils to understand that other people do have their different ways of looking at life, they have their own cultures, religions, lifestyles, etc. And we’re helping them to be able to communicate with people from different cultures and backgrounds, and helping them to respect others that is not something they would automatically do, but to understand, to respect and be able to communicate with those people” (Ibid, 18-19).

“I am very concerned that the Global Dimension agenda is currently driven by NGOs, not teachers and their agendas have not been acknowledged. Rather than giving children a better picture of the world and their place in it, I’m worried we are confirming the perception that the Global South is a place of powerlessness

and poverty. I'm also worried we are giving children the impression that they are more powerful than they are by over-emphasising campaigning" (Ibid, 24).

These viewpoints demonstrate that the issue is not about encouraging development education activities in the classroom, but rather about debating what it means and the extent to which the practices are questioning and challenging dominant educational thinking. This would mean including learning activities that moved beyond a traditional view of seeing the global South as 'just about poor people' who were helpless and needed aid and charity. Positive examples would be where learning questioned, challenged assumptions and stereotypes, and located poverty within an understanding of the causes of inequality and what people were doing for themselves.

### Global Skills and Further Education

Further education is an area that has been tackled by few development education practitioners. A consequence of this has been that where references are made in either policy statements or research to themes such as 'global learning', 'global citizenship' or 'global skills', conclusions can easily be drawn without an understanding of the contexts of the usage of the terminology or how they are interpreted by practitioners. Selby and Kagawa (2011), for example, have criticised this author's work in this area, most notably his report on *Global Skills* (Bourn, 2009) for its failure to critique or address neo-liberal agendas and economic growth models. Whilst there is some validity in their comments, any engagement in the debates in this area needs to start from a recognition of where further education programmes are located in the UK and probably in most other European countries, in relation to equipping learners with the skills for employment. The question to pose for development educationalists is in what ways could one intervene in these areas of educational practice, and with what aims in mind? Some of these issues have been addressed in our Research Centre's report for Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) (Bentall, Bourn, Blum, 2010) and the aim here is to look at different areas and forms of intervention and the potential challenges this creates. Three different interpretations of the usage of global skills are suggested and suggestions are then made about potential areas for intervention by development education organisations.

The starting point has to be the usage of the term 'global skills'. A large number of small training providers are increasingly using the term partly as a way of marketing themselves but also because there is increasing recognition that new forms of skills are being required by companies. An example of this in the UK is The Global Skills College in London. This institution runs training workshops on areas such as teamwork, information technology (IT), conflict resolution, and problem solving skills.<sup>1</sup> KPMG, the

1 For further details go to [http://www.lpi-global-skills.org.uk/workshop\\_schedule.php](http://www.lpi-global-skills.org.uk/workshop_schedule.php) (last accessed 12 September 2011).

international audit company, state the following:

“So what exactly are we looking for when we recruit new people? Naturally, we want you to have good technical skills, problem-solving abilities and commercial focus. We’re also looking for people with a lot of integrity - good team workers who can build effective relationships, learn from experience and bring out the best in others” (KPMG, 2008).

A second approach to the usage of the term within further education is one that sees global skills as about intercultural understanding and developing a more global outlook, often related to international experience. Whilst elements of this can be seen in some of the comments made from companies above, they have a distinct tradition and approach that is based on a broader humanistic approach towards education, linked to cross-cultural education and cosmopolitanism.

This tradition is rooted in discourses around intercultural education which is based on preparing learners to ‘act as interpreters and mediators between different cultures on mutual bases’ (Lasonen, 2009). In the context of further education, for example, this can be interpreted as adopting a ‘co-operative and team-working approach as mediators, interpreters and active agents between different cultures’ (Lasonen, 2009: 196). One of the main manifestations of this approach within further education is international partnerships between colleges (see Bentall, Bourn, Blum, 2009).

The value of these international initiatives and exchanges have however been critiqued in relation to school education (Martin, 2007; Leonard, 2008). They question the extent to which this form of learning can merely reinforce existing dominant ideological perceptions of the partner country and culture. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) have noted in regard to higher education that there is little evidence that student exchanges and overseas visits challenge dominant orthodoxies between the rich and the poor in the world. They state that despite much talk about global interconnectivity and interdependence, ‘international contact remains within globally differentiated cultural communities - the west versus the rest’ (Ibid: 175).

Behind the strategies for partnerships and links is therefore the assumption that mere intercultural experience can help to gain greater understanding of the wider world. Based on evidence from Martin (2007) and Leonard (2008), it is suggested here that all too often these exchanges and experiences reproduce dominant notions of cultural superiority. Intercultural dialogue is not really dialogue, but rather a form of reproduction of cultural domination. Only when the exchange and the partnership is part of a broader process of learning and engagement with global issues and questions, and when it addresses questions of power and domination, can such experiences

lead to a broader and more questioning global consciousness.

A third approach and usage of the term within further education is one that sees it as a way of promoting global perspectives and critical thinking. Here global skills can be seen as an approach that recognises complexity and critical thinking, and is linked closely to a values-based approach around social justice. Building on the work of Paulo Freire and Giroux (2005) this approach is based on recognition of an approach towards learning that is open, participatory but also deeply political, including recognition of power. Giroux (2005) talks about critical pedagogy starting, not with test scores, but with questions. He states that it is also about recognising competing views and vocabularies and the opening up of new forms of knowledge and creative spaces. This approach to global skills involves the following:

- Recognising the value of learning about different perspectives and approaches;
- Equipping the learner with the skills to question and develop the ability to enquire about and reflect critically upon a range of social, economic and cultural influences;
- Emphasising the importance of positive social engagement and of seeking solutions;
- Recognising the impact of globalisation on people's lives and the need to equip them with the ability to make sense of a rapidly changing world;
- Making reference to the forces that shape societal and economic change.

It includes recognition of concepts and approaches using the first and second lenses outlined in this paper, but takes this to a new level in terms of critical thinking, understanding of and valuing different perspectives; and above all recognising the impact of globalisation on relations between people and communities around the world. It also acknowledges the consequential differentials in terms of power and access to resources and learning opportunities.

These influences can be seen in the work of the Lancashire Global Education Centre and the Development Education Association (DEA)'s 'Global Learning for Global College' initiative. A small voluntary organisation in Lancashire (England), the Lancashire Global Education Centre developed a three year programme for tutors in their local college linked to language skills, most notably for migrant communities where English was a second language. They did this through the production of resources and training materials that related learners' skills needs to their own experiences and global issues. Themes covered include 'Fairtrade', the 'Millennium Development Goals', 'What You Can Do' and the 'Global Drugs Trade' (Lancashire Global Education Centre, 2008).

Newell-Jones (2007) for the Development Education Association suggested also:

“That education and training for a global society should lead to the acquisition of skills is not in question. However unless this includes essential skills in critical engagement and also leads to the adoption of impact-orientated behaviours, learning will be ineffectual” (Ibid. 5).

The inclusion of linkage to understanding of global issues and questions of critical engagement bring the global skills concept back to the impact of globalisation on a person’s life and how they make sense of the rapidly changing world around them - and have the confidence, knowledge and values-base to make a positive contribution to both the economy and society more widely. These elements could be summarised as:

- Understanding what globalisation means, particularly in relation to the individual, their community and their employment;
- Ability to understand and engage with global issues, such as climate change and poverty, in order to become a more informed and engaged citizen;
- Development of skills to understand and respect a range of cultures and values, and to be able to reflect critically upon one’s own values base.

There is some evidence in England within further education of a desire to recognise this more person-centred learning based on critical thinking perspectives, within strategies around global skills. One example is Regent’s Park College in Leicester, England, which promotes itself as a Global Citizens’ College. This outlook is summarised by the institution as follows:

“The college is a diverse and successful learning community and this makes it the ideal setting to offer a broad education for global citizenship. Our students achieve excellent exam results and they also want to contribute to changing things for the better and to develop the confidence, knowledge and skills to make a real difference in society. They develop skills of leadership, co-operation, communication, questioning, critical thinking, problem solving and conflict resolution. They learn to understand global, local and individual perspectives and to critically examine all points of view; in other words to be informed, skilled and active global citizens” (quoted in Bourn, 2008).

This approach towards critical skills builds on the work of Andreotti and De Souza (2008) in posing the need to move from fixed content and skills that

conform to a predetermined idea of society, towards concepts and strategies that address complexity, difference and uncertainty. It also means moving from an approach to learning that accepts given knowledge, to one that questions and moves positions and views. Finally this approach means moving from a universalist and ordered view of the world to one that recognises complex, multifaceted and different means of interpretation (Bourn and Neal, 2008).

There are therefore opportunities within the spectrum and forms of intervention in further education, but they pose questions around the extent to which you operate within the dominant discourses on globalisation and global skills, or seek a more radical and transformatory approach. Organisations engaged in development education practice could engage in further education, reflecting these different approaches. Their input would in part depend on the perspective of the organisation, but also on what opportunities, openings and above all spaces exist for more creative and transformatory approaches.

## Conclusion

This paper has aimed to address the challenge of the relationship of development education ideas and practices to the influences and needs of policy-makers and practitioners. Development education is a well-established body of practice in many European countries but unlike areas such as environmental education it has found it difficult to effectively establish itself independent of government or NGO funding. Yet as this paper has aimed to show there is now evidence in several areas of education of openings and opportunities that have demonstrated differing interpretations and understandings of learning about global and development issues. The extent to which these 'spaces' could be valuable for development education could only be measured by the extent to which they enable opportunities for participatory approaches towards learning, critical reflection and respect for different voices and perspectives.

Above all, what organisations engaged in development education need to consider is their particular contribution to learning about global issues and questions. It is not about identifying one universal approach but about clarifying what is feasible and possible, and above all ensuring that the organisation has some clarity about its own approach and theoretical basis. There are many interpretations of development education and what is needed is to debate what they are, which approach is most appropriate within a given educational arena and on what basis the pedagogy is introduced. Development education should not be seen as some form of monolithic approach to education but as a pedagogy that opens minds to question, consider, reflect and above all challenge viewpoints about the wider world and to identify different ways to critique them.

## References

Andreotti, V (2006) 'Soft versus critical global citizenship education' in *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 3, Autumn 2006, pp. 40-51, available: <http://www.developmenteducationreview.com/issue3-focus4>, (accessed 12 February 2015).

Andreotti, V (2010) 'Global Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: two different perspectives on the post of postmodernism', *International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning*, 2, 2, pp. 5-22.

Andreotti, V and de Souza, L M (2008) 'Translating theory into practice and walking minefields: lessons from the project "Through Other Eyes"', *International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning*, 1, 1, pp. 23-36.

Bentall, C, Blum, N and Bourn, D (2010) *Learning and Skills in a Global Society - the contribution of Further Education and Training Providers*, London: LSIS.

Bourn, D (2008) *Global Skills*, London: Centre for Excellence in Leadership.

Bourn, D and Hunt, F (2011) *The Global Dimension in Secondary Schools* – DERC Research Report No.1, London: Institute of Education.

CIO (2011) *Review of Using Aid Funds in the UK to promote awareness of global poverty* - Review for DFID, London: DfID.

Department for International Development (DfID) (1998) *Building Support for Development*. London: DFID.

Edge, K, Khamsi, K and Bourn, D (2008) *Exploring the Global Dimension in Secondary Schools*, Research report for DCSF, London: DCSF.

Egan, A (2011) 'Development Education and Corporate Power', Unpublished MA dissertation, Institute of Education, University of London.

European Consensus on Development: The Contribution of Development Education and Awareness Raising (2005), Brussels: Concord, available: [http://www.entwicklung.at/uploads/media/european\\_consensus\\_30102007.pdf](http://www.entwicklung.at/uploads/media/european_consensus_30102007.pdf), (accessed 12 February 2015).

Forghani-Arani, N and Hartmeyer, H (2010) 'Global Learning in Austria', *International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning*, 2, 2.

Giroux, H (2005) *Border Crossings*, New York, N.Y: Routledge.

The Global Skills College (London), available: [http://www.lpi-global-skills.org.uk/workshop\\_schedule.php](http://www.lpi-global-skills.org.uk/workshop_schedule.php) (accessed 19 February 2010).

Hoppers, C (2008) *South African Research Chair in Development Education -Framework and Strategy*, Pretoria, South Africa: University of South Africa.

KPMG (2008) 'The Global Skills Convergence', available: <http://www.kpmg.com/CN/en/IssuesAndInsights/ArticlesPublications/Documents/global-skills-convergence-O0810.pdf> (accessed 12 February 2015).

Krause, J (2010) *European Development Education Monitoring Report- Development Education Watch*, Brussels: European Multi-Stakeholder Forum.

Kumar, A (2008) 'Development Education and Dialogic Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century', *International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning*, vol.1.1, pp. 37-48.

Lancashire Global Education Centre (2008) *Global Skills: Understanding the World Through English*, Preston: LGEC.

Lasonen, J (2009) 'Intercultural Education: Promoting Sustainability in Education and Training' in J Fien, R Maclean and M-G Park (eds.) *Work, Learning and Sustainable Development*, Bonn: Springer.

Leonard, A (2008) 'Global School Relationships: school linking and modern challenges', in D Bourn (ed.) *Development Education: Debates and Dialogues*, London: Bedford Way Papers.

Marshall, H (2007) 'Global education in perspective: fostering a global dimension in an English secondary school', *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 37 (3), pp. 355-374.

Martin, F (2007) 'School Linking: A controversial issue', in H Claire and C Holden (eds.) *The Challenge of Teaching Controversial Issues*, London: Trentham Books, 147-160.

McCloskey, S (2011) 'Rising to the challenge: Development Education, NGOs and the Urgent Need for Social Change' in *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring 2011, pp. 32-46, available: <http://www.developmenteducationreview.com/issue12-focus4>, (accessed 12 February 2015).

McCollum, A (1996) *On the Margins? An Analysis of the Theory and Practice of Development Education in the 1900s*. Ph.D. Thesis, Open University.

Mundy, K (2007) *Charting Global Education in Canada's Elementary Schools*, Toronto,

ON: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE)/ UNICEF.

Newell-Jones, K (2007) *Global Skills and Lifelong Learning*, London: DEA.

O'Loughlin, E (ed.) (2006) *Global Education in Austria*, Lisbon: North-South Centre.

Rajacic, A, Surian, A, Fricke, H-J, Krause, J and Davis, P (2010a) *Study on the Experience and Actions of the Main European Actors Active in the Field of Development Education and Awareness Raising - Interim Report*, Brussels: European Commission.

Regan, C (ed.) (2006) *Development in an Unequal World*, Dublin, 80:20.

Rizvi, F and Lingard, B (2010) *Globalizing Education Policy*, Abingdon, Routledge.

Selby, D and Kagawa, F (2011) 'Development education and education for sustainable development: Are they striking a Faustian bargain?' in *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring 2011, pp. 15-31, available: <http://www.developmenteducationreview.com/issue12-focus3>, (accessed 12 February 2015).

## CRITICAL LITERACY: THEORIES AND PRACTICES IN DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Vanessa de Oliveira Andreotti

### Critical literacy in global citizenship and development education

*Critical Literacy: Theories and Practices* is the title of an academic open access journal I founded with Lynn Mario de Souza in 2006. When we first started the journal we were aware that different groups in education used the term in different ways, which is evident in the wide variety of articles we have received and published so far. Therefore, as an editor, I have used a very open and general definition of the term as ‘an educational practice that emphasises the connections between language, knowledge, power and subjectivities’. Authors have traced the origins of the term to different sources and associated critical literacy with different traditions, including critical pedagogy (e.g. Paulo Freire), the New/Multi-Literacies groups (e.g. Brian Street), discourse analysis (e.g. Norman Fairclough), and poststructuralism and postcolonial studies (e.g. Michel Foucault and Edward Said). The way I use critical literacy in my own work has been informed by the latter. In this article, I intend to outline some of the ways I have used this concept in research and teacher education related to global citizenship and development education as a strategy of examining the politics of knowledge production and the limits and possibilities of different knowledge systems.

In the article ‘Soft versus Critical Global Citizenship Education’ (2006), drawing on the works of Dobson (2006) and Spivak (2004; see also Andreotti, 2007, 2011, 2012), I stated that there were at least two common trends in educational initiatives that promoted concern for others (especially distant others). The first was based on the idea of a common humanity. I represented it as a ‘soft’ approach to global citizenship and development education. The second was based on the idea of justice and complicity in harm. I represented it as a critical approach to global citizenship and development education. I argued that ‘soft’ approaches based on a modernist understanding of linear time, progress and development, although productive in certain contexts, tended to close down the possibility of more critical approaches, particularly of approaches that offered alternative ways to conceptualise development, knowledge and solutions from the perspective of historically subjugated peoples (see also Bryan and Bracken, 2011; Bourn, 2011; Martin, 2011; Andreotti and Pashby, 2013). I asserted that ‘critical literacy’ as an educational practice that critically examines origins and implications of assumptions as well as other possibilities for signification, could be a viable way to address this problem.

The conceptualisation of critical literacy I used in that article combines questions within two orientations. The first orientation challenges imbalances in power and representation. This can be illustrated in questions such as: who decides (something is true or ideal), in whose name and for whose benefit? The second orientation challenges the notion that meaning is objective and self-evident. It emphasises the social, cultural and historical ‘construction’ of realities and highlights the limits and blind edges of any system of signification, promoting openness to suppressed knowledges and subjectivities and to what is unknown. This orientation is illustrated in questions such as: where is this understanding coming from (in terms of collective ‘root’ narratives), where is it leading to (in terms of social, cultural, political and environmental implications), and how can this be thought ‘otherwise’ (what possibilities of signification have been ‘forgotten’ in this context)?

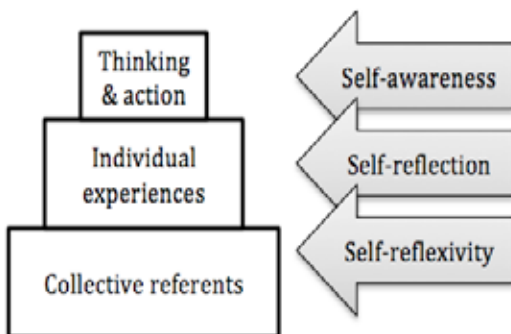
Within the multiplicity of critical literacy traditions, this approach differs slightly from critical engagements based on other orientations. Cervetti, Pardales and Damico (2001), for example, establish a distinction between traditional reading, critical reading and critical literacy, emphasising that each orientation of ‘reading critically’ will result in different questions being asked. Using their framework, I illustrate these differences through the scenario of a teacher and a student in a classroom, where the teacher is telling the student that s/he needs schooling in order to ‘be somebody in life’. Within the framework proposed by Cervetti et al., a traditional form of reading would enable ‘decoding’ questions such as: what did the teacher say, how did she substantiate her arguments, is what she said true or false? A critical form of reading would look further into the context and political framework of the scenario: where was this school, when did it happen, what was the socio-economic situation of the teacher and student, what was the motivation and political orientation of the teacher, what power relations are reproduced in the teacher’s statement, how did the teacher’s views affect the student and his/her family? A critical literacy approach would focus on the production of knowledge/power and enable questions like: who decides what ‘being somebody’ means, in whose name, for whose benefit then, and now, how do we come to think about the ways we do, who makes choices about understandings of reality, whose interests are represented in these choices, who benefits or loses with them, what choices are forgotten, how do people in different contexts understand the idea of ‘being somebody’?

When introducing critical literacy in development education, I choose scenarios that make evident dominant (taken for granted) perspectives about the benevolence of progress, charity and schooling in international engagements. One of the scenarios I use is a poster with pictures of children in need with the title ‘education for all can solve all problems’. I use the idea of ‘critical reading’ to explore the context of production of that poster: what

is the purpose of the poster, who created it and with what motives, where was it placed and why, how and why were pictures and words chosen, how is the reader manipulated through the language? I use the idea of ‘critical literacy’ to start to open up questions related to complicity in harm at a very basic level, such as: who decides what problems and solutions are (in the poster, historically and in ‘our’ context), what assumptions inform these decisions, how are unequal relationships between donors and recipients reproduced through these significations, what other conceptualisations of problems and solutions could be designed by communities that have been historically subjugated in these relationships, and so on.

I also usually emphasise a strategic distinction between reflexivity and reflection in the practice of critical literacy in teacher education. ‘Reflection on practice’ in teacher education has been mainstreamed as a form of thinking that looks at individual processes of meaning and decision making in order to improve educational practice amongst teachers. I suggest the term self-reflexivity to contrast the practice of reflection (thinking about individual journeys, assumptions and decisions), to the practice of tracing individual assumptions to collective socially, culturally and historically situated ‘stories’ with specific ontological and epistemological assumptions that define what is real, ideal and knowable (i.e. ‘root narratives’). This highlights that possibilities for thinking available to individuals, and individual ‘choices’ are never completely ‘free’, ‘neutral’ or only ‘individual’, as the things we say, think and do are conditioned (but not necessarily determined) by our individual *and* collective contexts and histories (see Andreotti, 2010a; 2010b). Self-reflexivity also challenges the assumption of the self-evident subject - the idea that there is a direct correlation between what we say, what we think and what we do. It draws attention to the complex constitution of subjectivities, to the interdependence of knowledge and power, and to what is sub- or unconscious in our relationships with the world.

I have used the metaphor of a three-layered cake (Figure 1) to illustrate these differences. At the top layer there is what we say, what we think and what we do, which are generally perceived to be directly related. A ‘Cartesian’ understanding of subjects states that we say exactly what we think and that we can describe objectively exactly what we do. However, our capacity to describe what we think is limited by what can be said: what is appropriate and intelligible to both ourselves and to others (e.g. we can think things that are not appropriate to say in specific contexts, or that we cannot articulate, acknowledge, or make sense of). Our capacity to describe what we do is limited by what we can notice and by what we want to present to others (e.g. we can say we are open and flexible, but fail to notice that we act in a contradictory way). This recognition of the limits of language is part of critical literacy practices.



The second layer of the cake is that of individual experiences. It acknowledges that what we say, think and do are based on our individual journeys in multiple contexts. They are rooted in our unique ‘baggage’ of concepts and traumatic, inspiring and ordinary learning experiences, and dependent upon what we have been exposed to. The third layer of the cake recognises that our experiencing and interpretation of these experiences are conditioned by collective referents grounded in the languages we have inherited to make sense of reality and communicate with others. These languages have specific criteria for what counts as real (ontology), what can be known and how (epistemology), what is ideal and how to get there (methodology). These collective criteria are socially, culturally and historically ‘situated’ - they depend on a group’s social, cultural and historical background and therefore they change (slowly) over time, as contexts change and criteria of different groups intersect and contradict each other. Therefore, there is always diversity within a group of same criteria, as things are never static, but there is also always a dominant set of criteria that represents the ‘common sense’ of a group or groups. I suggest that an analysis of the first layer could be named ‘self-awareness’, an analysis of the second layer ‘self-reflection’ and an analysis of the third, ‘self-reflexivity’. All three are important for development education.

In order to address some of the pedagogical challenges of introducing this conceptualisation of critical literacy in the classroom context in my work as a teacher educator, I created a matrix of the relationship between knowledge, power, the construction of realities in the classroom, and ideas about the control of pedagogical outcomes (see Andreotti, 2008). I illustrate this matrix with examples from development education, as the practice of critical literacy in this area is sometimes accused of either ‘indoctrinating’ or ‘paralysing’ learners (see Vare and Scott, 2007 for a similar discussion on Education for Sustainable Development). Critical literacy is perceived to indoctrinate learners when a specific critical analysis of injustice and position on justice are presented as the only morally justifiable path. Critical literacy is

perceived as paralysing learners in questioning everything, when it emphasises a multiplicity of perspectives, the limits of knowledge and the complexity and context dependency of positions on justice. Thus, the matrix helps think through these issues and present these perceived problems as part of a more general discussion on the role of education. This matrix combines two ways of thinking about education (i.e. ‘think as I do and do as I say’ and ‘think for yourself and choose responsibly what to do’) and two ways of thinking about knowledge (i.e. ‘there is one right answer independent of context’ and ‘answers are socially constructed and context dependent’).

Therefore, there are (at least) four different possibilities for thinking and action. The first possibility is ‘think as I do, do as I say, there is only one right answer’. The example from development education I use is a quote from a teacher:

“I teach my students that people in poorer countries lack technology, education and proper work habits. I make sure my students understand that we have a moral obligation to help them by providing assistance through charity and expertise”.

The second possibility is ‘think for yourself and choose responsibly what to do, but there is only one right answer’, which is illustrated in the quote:

“I teach my students that they need to be critical thinkers – to separate facts from opinions and to search for impartial, objective information to construct their arguments. I believe rational and scientific reasoning is the only way to achieve a just and prosperous society”.

The third possibility is ‘answers are context dependent, but in my class (i.e. in this context), you should think as I do and do as I say’, illustrated in:

“I teach my students that textbook history is always told from the point of view of the winners and that the perspective of the oppressed peoples are seldom promoted. I teach my students the perspective of the oppressed because I want them to be willing to fight for social justice”.

Last, the fourth possibility is ‘answers are context dependent, you should learn to think for yourself and choose responsibly what to do’, exemplified in:

“I teach my students that there are always different perspectives on any issue, that these are grounded in social, cultural and historical processes, and that whatever choice they make will have systemic

implications. My job is to create spaces for students to engage with the ethics of global challenges, processes and dilemmas in ways that create a sense of interdependence and responsibility for themselves and towards the world”.

I emphasise that decisions about possibilities are also context dependent (a teacher may legitimately choose the first under certain circumstances), but that the fourth possibility has not been common in formal Western schooling where the first and second possibilities have been dominant and also imposed or exported all over the world.

In terms of engagements with historically subjugated communities who may offer alternative perspectives on international development issues, in the Through Other Eyes Initiative (TOE), Lynn Mario de Souza and I developed a resource and framework of a critical literacy practice based on Spivak's ideas of learning to unlearn, learning to learn, learning to listen and learning to reach out (see Andreotti, 2011a; Andreotti and Souza, 2008; Souza and Andreotti, 2009). I also framed this kind of practice of critical literacy as a response to increasing complexity, uncertainty, diversity and inequality in contemporary societies related to two different conceptualisations of the 'post-' in postmodernism (i.e. post- as 'after', and post- as questioning) that could prompt an educational process to enable students to move from the desire for absolute certainties, fixed identities/communities, and predictable and consensual futures towards being comfortable with contingent and provisional certainties, complex and hybrid identities/communities and open co-created futures in the context of global education (Andreotti, 2010b).

I have used insights from postcolonial theory both to articulate a critique of soft approaches to development and global education and to tentatively propose possibilities for more ethical educational possibilities (Andreotti, 2011b). It is important to note that it is theoretically contradictory to expect a clear set of normative values or ethical principles from a postcolonial critique where the benevolence of every attempt to 'make things better' is suspect of reproducing unexamined colonial practices. However, it is precisely this suspicion of the benevolence of benevolence (see Jefferess, 2008) that can create the possibility of self-reflexivity, humility and openness that ground ethical forms of solidarity 'before will' (Spivak, 2004), where historical imbalances related to distribution of resources, value and knowledge production are kept firmly on the table. Postcolonial theory subtly implies a set of ethical practices that render it impossible to turn our back to difficult issues, such as our complicity in systemic harm, the persistence of relations of dominance, complexities and paradoxes of crossing borders, the gap between what we say and what we do, or our own sanctioned ignorances.

If one is looking for a 'feel good' recipe for how to make things better, postcolonial theory is not the place to search for it. Looking at one's

own historical and systemic legacy of oppression might involve a stage of guilt - of realising that one's positive self-image does not hold when looked at from the perspective of those more severely affected by the systemic violence that we benefit from. However, guilt is only an issue when we are attached to specific desires which are constantly emphasised in the architecture of modernity. Three of these modern collective desires are key to the inequalities in North-South relations that are constantly reproduced in education: 1) the desire for seamless progress in linear time epitomised in science, technology and middle-class metropolitan lifestyles; 2) the desire for this progress to be achieved through innocent human protagonism (human agency focusing on solutions and forgetting how it is part of the problem); and 3) the desire for totalising forms of knowledge production grounding this process (i.e. knowing the world in order to control it) (Andreotti, 2014). In North-South encounters, these desires translate into patterns of engagement, flows and representation that are:

- Hegemonic (justifying superiority and supporting domination);
- Ethnocentric (projecting one view, one 'forward', as universal);
- Ahistorical (forgetting historical legacies and complicities);
- Depoliticised (disregarding power inequalities and ideological roots of analyses and proposals);
- Salvationist (framing help as the burden of the fittest);
- Un-complicated (offering easy solutions that do not require systemic change);
- Paternalistic (seeking affirmation of superiority through the provision of help) (Andreotti, 2012a: 2).

The first letter of each pattern makes up the acronym 'HEADS UP'. I have put together a checklist of questions to help to identify each pattern in education (see Andreotti, 2012a) and also a list of questions that complicate further common/easy solutions for each of the patterns (see Andreotti, 2012b). At the heart of this work is the idea that education is about preparing myself and those I work with to enlarge possibilities for thinking and living together in a finite planet that sustains complex, plural, uncertain, inter-dependent and, unfortunately, deeply unequal societies. In order to do this, perhaps what is needed is an attitude of sceptical optimism or hopeful scepticism (rather than naïve hope or dismissive scepticism) in order to expand our inherited frameworks in terms of four educational priorities. First, it is necessary to understand and learn from repeated historical patterns of mistakes, in order to open the possibilities for new mistakes to be made. Second, we need to recognise how we are implicated or complicit in the problems we are trying to address. Third, we need to learn to enlarge our referents for reality and knowledge, acknowledging the gifts and limitations of every knowledge system

and moving beyond polarised antagonisms towards agonistic solidarities (Andreotti, 2011a, 2014). Fourth, we must engage with more complex social analyses acknowledging that if we understand the problems and the reasons behind them in simplistic ways, we may do more harm than good.

In relation to the latter, it is also important for the field that these analyses are accessible and available to different discursive communities (e.g. academics, non-governmental organisation [NGO] practitioners, teachers and students). Therefore, work that translates and synthesises discussions in different fields (e.g. politics, development, sociology, social movements) can be very useful and important in moving the debate in the field forward in a more organic way (see for example Andreotti, 2011b). The downside of translations and syntheses is that they simplify complex discussions and can create seemly fixed distinctions that are always more complex and fluid than their representations. Nevertheless, if used as a starting point for discussion (that is also open to critique), they are necessary tools in the creation of a tradition of responsible, non-exclusive, critical intellectual engagement in the field (see also Evans, Ingram, McDonald and Webber, 2009; Khoo, 2008, Marshall, 2011; Richardson, 2008). It is in this spirit that, in the second part of this article, I offer a new conceptual cartography which represents a revision of the popular distinction between soft and critical approaches to global citizenship education (Andreotti, 2006).

### **Mapping Narratives as a Key Critical Literacy Exercise**

Tracing individual or institutional narratives to collective ‘root’ narratives (or meta-narratives) is a central exercise of the kind of critical literacy I advocate in this article. As an intellectual exercise, mapping discourses helps people clarify their own positions by making evident the ambivalence of signification (the fact that words mean different things in different contexts), and by promoting the productive identification of inherent assumptions, patterns, trends, differences, similarities, paradoxes, and contradictions between and within different worldviews. Mapping exercises can also help people to explore the problem spaces that generated the questions they are seeking answers for in order to check if they are still relevant or if questions have already changed (Scott, 1999). However, each mapping exercise is not neutral or transparent: as all interpretations are socially, culturally and historically situated, so is the ‘picture’ presented in a map by a map-maker. Therefore, it is important to remember that maps are useful as long as they are not taken to be the territory that they represent and are used critically as a starting point of discussion.

The mapping exercise I present below establishes distinctions between a) technicist instrumentalist, b) liberal humanist, c) critical and postcritical, and d) ‘Other’ narratives of society, education, development and diversity. Root-narratives a, b, and c reproduce similar characteristics of

privileging: anthropocentrism (putting ‘mankind’ at the centre); teleology (aiming for a predefined outcome in terms of progress); dialectics (expecting a linear progression towards a synthesis); universal reason (the idea of one rationality); and the Cartesian subject (who believes that he can know himself and everything else objectively). I propose that these basic characteristics should not be seen as all good or all bad, but as historically situated, and potentially restrictive if *universalised as a single story* through social, political or educational projects, as they prevent the imagination of other possibilities.

The technicist instrumentalist root-narrative frames *social engineering as economic rationalisation decided by experts*. This narrative can be seen at work in educational and development initiatives concerned with the creation of human capital for national economic growth in knowledge societies. From this perspective education is perceived as a way to maximise the performance of individuals in global markets driven by services and innovation, in order to improve their employability or entrepreneurial capacity with a view to contribute to their country’s competitiveness in global economies. Economic growth is associated with the acquisition and accumulation of universal knowledge (in contrast, for example, to the explanation that economic growth is based on hegemonic control of means of production) and poverty is defined as an individual or a country’s or an individual’s deficit of knowledge, competencies and skills to participate in the global economy. The rationale for education is presented as a business case, as an individual responsibility of lifelong learning and adaptation to ever-changing economic contexts. From this perspective, global/development education, often associated with ideas of ‘social responsibility’ involves the export of expertise from those heading the way in terms of economic development to those lagging behind. Engagements with other cultures are defined in relation to national interests, such as the protection of national labour markets, the expansion of consumer markets, and the perceived threat of unwanted immigration, creating a need for controlled and market oriented internationalisation based on nationally defined objectives.

The root-narrative of liberal humanism frames social engineering as *human progress decided by national representatives*. From this perspective, education serves as enculturation into a national culture defined by its political or intellectual representatives, as well as an international culture perceived as an encounter between nationally defined groups of individuals primarily concerned with a combination of individual, national and humanitarian interests. What human progress looks like is decided by national representatives in supranational governance institutions like the United Nations, through a process of international consensus on key universal aims to be delivered by nation states, generally focusing on human rights, substantial freedoms or human capabilities. From this perspective, education should disseminate the international consensus on universal human progress

defined in terms of access to education, healthcare, democracy and economic development. In this sense, obstacles to human progress become the focus of government agreed targets (such as the Millennium Development Goals), campaigns (like Education for All), and other charitable and humanitarian interventions which generally define help as the moral responsibility of those who are ahead in terms of international development.

Poverty is explained as a deficit in terms of human progress, thus education becomes a vehicle for poverty eradication through partnerships between donors/dispensers and receivers of aid, knowledge, education, resources (e.g. books, computers, etc.), technical assistance, human rights, or volunteer labour. From this perspective, education is a means to prepare world leaders to bring order and progress for all (generally through education itself). Engagements with difference are also defined in national or ethnic terms: global learners are encouraged to acquire knowledge about different cultures/nationalities, including different perspectives, in order to be able to work with diverse populations towards common/consensual goals (predefined by national or supranational governance institutions). Therefore, different perspectives and critical engagement are welcome within pre-defined frameworks (i.e. as long as there is acceptance of specific ideas of development, progress, human rights, governance, etc.).

Critical and postcritical root-narratives frame *social engineering as fair distribution done by ordinary people* (rather than experts or representatives). These perspectives are based on a critique of both technicist instrumentalist and liberal humanist root-narratives highlighting injustices and inequalities created or maintained by their ideals and means of implementation. In terms of state governance, critical and postcritical narratives emphasise the complicity of initiatives based on economic or humanist ideals in the creation and maintenance of poverty and marginalisation in order to sustain exponential compound economic growth and/or improvements in quality of life that benefit only small sections of the world population. A critical narrative (still drawing on humanism) focuses its critique on the primacy of economic growth imperatives in nation state agendas, as well as the erosion of autonomy and accountability of governments to their own populations due to lobbying and increasingly closer relationships with corporations. This type of critical humanism attempts to expand the notion of consensual human progress to include the rights of those who have historically been marginalised working against patriarchy, sexism, class divisions, racism, ableism and/or hetero-normativity.

Post-critical narratives claim that the consensus on human progress, based on modern development, is manufactured by elites and imposed around the world as a form of imperialism that eliminates other conceptualisations and possibilities of progress and development, therefore, they challenge the idea of social engineering. Post-critical narratives will tend to focus on

relationality, complex subjectivities, difficulties of representation (of hybrid and fluid communities/identities), intersectional violence, and agonism (rather than antagonism) in politics. Education, from critical and postcritical perspectives, is concerned with the transformation of society and the creation of a new social order more inclusive of or led by those who have been silenced or exploited by the current dominant system - it involves an emphasis on critical social analyses of unequal power relations, distributions of labour and wealth (emphasised in critical narratives) and the politics of representation and knowledge production (emphasised in post-critical narratives).

Education, therefore, from this perspective, is about the creation of a critical mass of people who could see and imagine beyond the limitations and oppression of the current system in order to bring a different reality into being. Engagement with difference involves listening to and empowering those who have been marginalised and insisting on the need for spaces of dissent where other alternatives can emerge. The World Social Forum, the Occupy Wall Street Movement, the Idle No More Movement in Canada, and the occupation of Syntagma Square in Athens are examples of initiatives based on critical narratives in civil society. Several educational initiatives inspired by anti-colonial, feminist and anti-oppressive movements since the 1960s also enact critical humanist ideals.

Through education in contemporary metropolitan and industrialised societies people are exposed to different degrees to the three configurations of thinking described so far. The common theme of social change as social engineering in the three configurations is also not a coincidence. All these narratives can be traced to common roots in the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, the Reformation, European colonialism and resistance to colonialism, and, particularly, the European Enlightenment. However, since these cultural, social and economic transitions have framed our ideas of what is good, ideal and normal, it is important to acknowledge our constitutive blindness (Santos, 2007) to other forms of seeing, knowing and being in the world that do not fit what we can recognise through the frames of references we have become used to.

For this reason, I presented the fourth option 'Other(s)' as a question mark: non-anthropocentric, non-teleological, non-dialectical, non-universal and non-Cartesian possibilities. For people over-socialised in the first three options (i.e. most of us who have been schooled), these possibilities would be extremely difficult to even begin to identify or to experience. Thus, it may be more useful to present them as absences rather than categories. The closest and most intelligible example that I have of an 'Other' narrative is that of a global education centre in Pincheq, a tiny village between Pisac and Cuzco in Peru (see below). Even though their principles for global education may seem self-evident and understandable, a deeper experiential cognitive-relational engagement with the metaphoric ontologies of that region would

be necessary to unlock contingent meanings that are not obvious in what we can represent in writing (see Andreotti, Ahenakew and Cooper 2011, 2012). I use this here to illustrate the limited nature of our interpretations (that always rely on inherited concepts) and the complexity and difficulty of translating and representing these worldviews outside of their contexts (e.g. if you think you 'understand' this, think again), both of these preoccupations are key to critical literacy.

The Apu Chupaqpata Global Education Centre's 'Global Education Principles' (2012) are:

The entire planet Earth (i.e. Pachamama) is my home and country, my country is my mother and my mother knows no borders.

1. We are all brothers and sisters: humans, rocks, plants, animals and all others.
2. Pachamama is a mother pregnant of another generation of non-predatory children who can cultivate, nurse, and balance forces and flows, and who know that any harm done to the planet is harm done to oneself.
3. The answers are in each one of us, but it is difficult to listen when we are not in balance, we hear too many different voices, especially in the cities.
4. The priority for life and education is balance: to act with wisdom, to balance material consumption, to learn to focus on sacred spiritual relationships, to work together with the different gifts of each one of us, with a sense of oneness. Our purpose is to learn, learn and learn again (in many lives) to become better beings.
5. There is no complete knowledge, we all teach, learn and keep changing: it is a path without an end. There is knowledge that can be known and described, there is knowledge that can be known, but not described and there is knowledge that cannot be known or described.
6. Our teachers are the Apus (the mountains-ancestors), Pachamama, the plants, what we live day by day and what has been lived before, the animals, our children, our parents, the spirits, our history, our ancestors, the fire, the water, the wind, all the different elements around us.

7. The serpent, the puma and the condor are symbols of material and non-material dimensions, of that which can be known, of that which cannot be known or determined, and of the connections between all things.
8. The traditional teachings of generosity, of gratitude, and of living in balance that are being lost are very important for our children – it is necessary to recover them.
9. The world is changed through love, patience, enthusiasm, respect, courage, humility and living life in balance. The world cannot be changed through wars, conflicts, racism, anger, arrogance, divisions and borders. The world cannot be changed without sacred spiritual connections.

## Conclusion

I started this article with an overview of the ways I have used critical literacy in global citizenship and development education, particularly in the context of teacher education. I offered examples of how critical literacy may trigger new questions and directions in relation to global and development education in terms of how we can move beyond repeated problematic patterns of thinking and engagements and how we can start to approach increasing complexity, uncertainty, plurality and inequality in contemporary societies. I emphasised the importance of intellectual depth, of multiple and complex social analyses and of making these analyses accessible to different communities in order to build a strong foundation for the field. In the second part of the paper, I presented a new conceptual cartography that traces assumptions in three common sets of narratives in education and that frames a fourth set of narratives as a question mark, something that the related fields of global and development education could further engage with to pluralise knowledge in the present in order to pluralise the future.

## References

- Andreotti, V (2006) 'Soft versus critical global citizenship education', *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 3, Autumn, pp. 40-51.
- Andreotti, V (2007) 'An ethical engagement with the Other: Gayatri Spivak on education', *Critical Literacy: Theories and Practices*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 69-79.
- Andreotti, V (2010a) 'Global education in the 21st century: Two different perspectives on the "post-" of postmodernism', *International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 5-22.
- Andreotti, V (2010b) 'Glimpses of a postcolonial and post-critical global citizenship education' in G Elliott, C Fourali and S Issler (eds.) *Education for Social Change*, London: Continuum.
- Andreotti, V (2011a) *Actionable postcolonial theory in education*, New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Andreotti, V (2011b) 'Engaging the (geo)political economy of knowledge construction: Towards decoloniality and diversity in global citizenship education', *Globalization, Society and Education Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 3-4, pp. 381-397.
- Andreotti, V (2012a) 'HEADS UP: editor's preface', *Critical Literacy: Theories and Practices*, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 3-5.
- Andreotti, V (2012b) 'Education, knowledge and the righting of wrongs', *Other Education: the Journal of Educational Alternatives*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 19-31.
- Andreotti, V (2014) 'Conflicting epistemic demands in poststructuralist and postcolonial engagements with questions of complicity in systemic harm', *Educational Studies: A Journal of the American Educational Studies Association*, Vol. 50, No. 4, pp. 378-397.
- Andreotti, V, Ahenakew, C and Cooper, G (2011) 'Epistemological pluralism: challenges for higher education', *AlterNative Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 40-50.
- Andreotti, V, Ahenakew, C and Cooper, G (2012) 'Towards global citizenship education "otherwise"' in V de Oliveira Andreotti and L de Souza (eds.) *Postcolonial Perspectives on Global Citizenship Education*, New York: Routledge.
- Andreotti, V and Souza, L (2008) 'Global learning in the knowledge society: four tools for discussion', *Journal of Development Education Research and Global Education*, Vol. 31, pp. 7-12.
- Andreotti, V and Pashby, K (2013) 'Digital democracy and global citizenship education: mutually compatible or mutually complicit?', *The Educational Forum*, Vol. 77, No. 4, pp 422-437.
- Bourn, D (2011) 'Discourses and Practices around Development Education: From

Learning about Development to Critical Global Pedagogy', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 13, Autumn, pp. 11-29.

Bryan, A and Bracken, M (2011) *Learning to read the world? Teaching and learning about global citizenship and international development in post-primary schools*, Dublin: Irish Aid.

Cervetti, G, Pardales, M, and Damico, J (2001) 'A tale of differences: Comparing the traditions, perspectives, and educational goals of critical reading and critical literacy', *Reading Online*, Vol. 4, No. 9, available: [http://www.readingonline.org/articles/art\\_index.asp?HREF=/articles/cervetti/index.html](http://www.readingonline.org/articles/art_index.asp?HREF=/articles/cervetti/index.html) (accessed 15 May 2014).

Dobson, A (2006) 'Thick cosmopolitanism', *Political Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 1, pp. 165-184.

Evans, M, Ingram, L A, Macdonald, A and Weber, N (2009) 'Mapping the "global dimension" of citizenship education in Canada: The complex interplay of theory, practice and context', *Citizenship Teaching and Learning*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 17-34.

Jefferess, D (2008) 'Global citizenship and the cultural politics of benevolence', *Critical Literacy: Theories and Practices*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 27-36.

Khoo, S (2011) 'Exploring global citizenship and internationalisation in Irish and Canadian universities', *Globalisation, Societies, Education*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp. 337-353.

Marshall, H (2011) 'Instrumentalism, ideals and imaginaries: Theorising the contested space of global citizenship education in schools', *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, Vol. 9, No. 3-4, pp. 411-426.

Martin, F (2011) 'Global ethics, sustainability and partnership' in G Butt (ed.) *Geography, Education and the Future*, London: Continuum Books.

Richardson, G (2008) 'Conflicting imaginaries: Global citizenship education in Canada as a site of contestation' in M O'Sullivan and K Pashby (eds.) *Citizenship education in the era of globalization: Canadian perspectives*, Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense.

Scott, D (1999) *Refashioning futures: Criticism after postcoloniality*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Souza, L and Andreotti, V (2009) 'Culturalism, difference and pedagogy: lessons from indigenous education in Brazil' in J Lavia and M Moore (eds.) *Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Policy and Practice: Decolonizing Community Contexts*, London: Routledge.

Spivak, G (2004) 'Righting wrongs', *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 103, pp. 523-581.

Vare, P and Scott, W (2007) 'Learning for a change: exploring the relationship between education and sustainable development', *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 191-198.

## DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AT THIRD LEVEL IN IRELAND

Su-ming Khoo, Kelly Coate and Carol Wrenn

### Introduction

Research that relates to development education currently comprises a very minor part of the overall research landscape, with relatively little funded and published research on the area. There has been a recent expansion in research, mainly funded by Irish Aid in pursuit of a strategic development education programme. This article primarily overviews the more general trends in research, recognising that these trends will have an impact on development education. At present, the emerging landscape is complex and research about Irish development education is at a very early stage. Our approach in this paper is to initiate critical debate by documenting some of the challenges facing all educators and researchers, including development educators.

From a DE perspective, education ‘... has a complex role to play in individual and community development and in the economy, environment, politics and society at national and global levels’ (Faul, 2007: 9). This corresponds to a global vision of third-level education as part of ‘... economic, cultural and social development’ and contributing to ‘...shared values and ethics which are the foundation of social cohesion and nation building’ (UNESCO, 2003: 12-13). The expansion of research presents new opportunities for third-level educators, as researchers, to explore this complex role and develop new approaches to DE. Yet, our initial impressions of the Irish research landscape suggest that the expansion of research, when coupled with more intensive teaching activities, may lead to tensions and contradictions. There are now more opportunities to conduct research and improve teaching. However, proponents of DE as an emancipatory and humanistic educational project may be concerned at the demands of the new research landscape and the instrumental view of knowledge embedded in the new research programmes.

Research impacts on DE in different ways. On the positive side, it brings the promise of new, more informed activities and audiences, and may lead to new meanings of DE (Khoo, 2006). However, as research becomes more programmatic and policy focused, new constraints and unintended outcomes are also likely to follow. The current research funding mechanisms favour a narrow, instrumental view of knowledge production, and embed competitive processes that run counter to the more cooperative, egalitarian, ‘sharing’ modes of working that inform development education practice.

While third-level institutions continue to defend long-standing traditions of scholarship, marketisation is problematic for those who view knowledge as a public good. Economistic and instrumental goals and values have been consistently emphasised and successively re-affirmed in Irish and European education policy, such as the Lisbon Agenda and the Irish responses to it (An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, 2005).

Jenkins and Mackenzie (2007) review a similarly changing landscape in the UK and pose several pertinent questions: how should development educators deal with the 'marketisation' of education? In what way does the globalising economy impact on the content of DE? Should DE engage with business as well as trade unions? What is the 'skills and knowledge balance' needed for learners to become both social and economic actors on the global scale? These questions show how aware development educators are of the inherent tension between marketised understandings of education and the need to critique such understandings. The engagement with business and the focus on work and skills show how far the DE goalposts have already moved away from traditional preoccupations with radical and emancipatory critique. We take the debate about marketisation to be crucial and suggest that many other key questions are linked to it.

### **The Expansion of Research**

Before 1998, funding for research was comparatively limited and there was relatively little emphasis on it. Irish researchers mainly followed the 'lone scholar' model, with little strategic direction or programmatic funding (Forfás 2007:12). A new phase of public investment at the end of the 1990s brought dramatic changes. Two new Research Councils were created to direct and channel research funding - the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) and Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology (IRCSET). In addition, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) became a major research funding agency when it took over the research role of Enterprise Ireland in 2003. Its research budget grew rapidly from €11 million in 2003 to €114 million in 2004. Under the National Development Plan (NDP) 2007-2013, SFI funded €1.4 billion of scientific research in two targeted areas - biotechnology and information technology.

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) runs the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL), cross-cutting other dedicated research programmes by funding infrastructural development for research. Between 1998 and 2003 the PRTL scheme committed three cycles of funding worth €604.5 million. Two-thirds of PRTL funds were spent on buildings and equipment, the remaining one-third going to recurrent expenditure on research projects (HEA, 2004).

European research programmes add another layer of complexity. The Seventh Framework Programme 2007-2013 (FP7) represented a substantial

contributor to Irish research. Over €€50 billion was made available over the seven year period from the European Commission to develop a more integrated European Research Area. Most of the funding was targeted at creating collaborative pan-European research teams, with a broad focus on economic growth, employment, competitiveness and sustainability (Cordis, 2007).

The Irish Aid (IA) - HEA Programme of Strategic Cooperation and the Health Research Board's (HRB) Global Health Research Programme, are more specifically relevant to development cooperation. These research funds announced the provision of €€12.5 million and €€1 million respectively in 2007. Neither were designed for commercial advantage, both aiming to explicitly benefit disadvantaged groups on a global scale. Both programmes were based on Irish Aid policies, outlined in the White Paper on Irish Aid (Irish Aid, 2006). This policy emphasised poverty reduction, gender equality, good governance, and the environment, with special reference to Irish Aid's programme countries (predominantly the poorest African countries).

A new institutional emphasis on research has developed, permeating the strategic direction and culture of the whole tertiary sector. In order to manage these changes, every university has made senior appointments (Deans or Vice-Presidents of Research). However, the research landscape still appears somewhat uncoordinated, with different funding bodies administering separate academic research schemes, each with its own criteria and deadlines. The number of overlapping research agencies and initiatives in Ireland is problematic because of the small size of the system, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has recommended more centralised and strategic research planning. One of their specific recommendations was that SFI's role should be expanded to cover the IRCHSS and IRCSET (OECD, 2006: 67). While the same report acknowledged the role of universities in promoting the 'intellectual and artistic life of the nation and...contribution to citizenship and civil society' (2006: 24), the implications are that non-commercial research areas could get subsumed under the priorities of industry-driven science and technology research.

### **Marketisation: Academic capitalism?**

The growing influence of market rationality on the higher education systems has led some observers to coin the phrase 'academic capitalism' (Slaughter and Leslie, 1999). Academic teaching and research are pushed towards the realities of a global knowledge marketplace as institutions compete for fee-paying students and research funding. In national and regional fora, the tertiary sector is understood as a site of production for the growth economy - producing ideas and people to drive economic development and national competitiveness. While academia is still regarded as a site of traditional scholarship, teaching and learning have become somewhat 'marketised'.

There is greater emphasis on graduate teaching and research, and evident bias towards specific areas of science, technology and engineering, as well as pro-market values. In PRTLTI, biosciences accounted for half the research grants, while physics and environmental sciences accounted for a further 10 percent each. Social and information sciences research gained about 5 percent of research funds, while the least commercial humanities sector accounted for only 2.7 percent (HEA, 2004). A review of the PRTLTI acknowledges that the primary goals for the PRTLTI are not strictly market-led, however it openly and uncritically recommends the ultimate goal of 'embedding an ethos of commercialisation' (HEA, 2004:3).

Running somewhat counter to the rather narrow definition of science and technology research, the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) Report (2007) defended the traditional importance of non-commercial research in a wide range of subjects for 'balanced development'. The RIA promoted a broader interpretation of 'innovation' and presented the humanities and social sciences as being '...integral to the development of culture, the economy, and society as a whole' (RIA, 2007xiii). However, even this report acknowledged the dominant logic of academic capitalism. It justified humanities research as investment in the knowledge-based economy, highlighting the supporting role played by the arts and humanities to Ireland's economic growth. The proportion of research funding allocated to the social sciences and humanities shows a divergence between teaching and research priorities. 58 percent of undergraduates choose humanities and social sciences (HEA, 2007a). One challenge is the limited opportunity for progression to research in the humanities and social sciences subjects due to the small proportion of research funding that these subjects receive. An additional €18.7 percent of PRTLTI funding was allocated to the humanities and social sciences in 2007 (HEA 2007b), which may enhance research in these disciplines.

Academic capitalism has led to a market rationality entering an essentially non-market landscape (Skilbeck 2001). In the UK, this has led to some bitter comments about the negative effects on research quality and academic morale, as researchers and departments are ranked in a crude, materialistic and psychologically destructive way (Harley, 2002 quoted in Sidhu 2006: 121). However, the Irish tertiary sector is not very marketised in the literal sense. It is almost entirely government funded with the state contributing 85-90 percent of all funding in 2001-02. The sector became less private when the government moved to provide free undergraduate tuition in 1995-6 (OECD, 2004:15). Despite its highly public nature, the market language of the new research agenda seems to pull the sector in contradictory directions. The next three sections explore three areas of tension and contradiction before returning to discuss the prospects for DE. These are the public-private paradox, the demands and risks of research and the tensions between research and teaching.

## The Public-Private Paradox

There appears to be a paradoxical public-private relationship when we examine funding *vis-à-vis* the benefits of research. Irish research for the 'public good' has been substantially financed by private and mainly overseas sources, whilst national public funding appears to be directed towards corporate profit and accumulation. International philanthropy has been a major source of research funding in Ireland, especially in non-science and technology topics such as public service reform, children, young people, ageing, peace and reconciliation and human rights. One large single donor has predominated - Atlantic Philanthropies (AP). Between 1982 and 2004, AP awarded over \$1 billion in grants to the island of Ireland, \$666 million of which went to the Republic, largely to the higher education sector (AP, 2007). This included co-funding for the Irish government's PRTL scheme. Herein lies the paradox - a single private philanthropist has provided a large proportion of research funding to remedy the government's historical under-funding of research toward the social and public good.

While the foundation agreed to commit a further \$250 million to Irish higher education between 2006-2008, the Irish government's implicit reliance on it to co-fund its tertiary sector is clearly not sustainable as AP has planned to spend its entire endowment by 2020. Philanthropic giving of this sort may, in some way, encourage governments to avoid full responsibility in respect to higher education. Issues of accountability and participation are also raised by this paradox, since foundations are mainly accountable to their donors and their investment in public oriented research is driven by their own agenda, rather than one decided by the electorate. On the other hand, their independence also means that they may be more prepared to fund contentious, critical and non-commercial research and that in itself strengthens and diversifies the public sphere.

In contrast, public funding has emphasised more narrowly defined and commercially oriented research. For example, SFI combines the national aim of scientific excellence with that of commercial relevance. Its policies for 2008 were to recruit 50 'top tier' researchers or research teams in biotechnology and information and communications technology, but also to deepen links between universities and 'at least 10 foreign owned multinational firms' and five indigenous companies. Scientific knowledge is seen as 'a technology transfer system that brings maximum economic benefit to Ireland through leading-edge intellectual property...' (SFI 2004: 4). Research success is measured in conventional scholarly terms - numbers of researchers, scholarly publications and membership of elite international academic bodies. However, success is also measured by the number of patents, commercial start-ups and linkages with foreign multinational companies.

The two national research funds that hold promise for developing public interest research, as discussed above, are the IA-HEA Programme of

Strategic Cooperation and the HRB's Global Health Research Programme. Such initiatives reflect a new role for research in meeting Ireland's stated aspirations to become an exemplary aid giver. Irish Aid's policies are comparatively progressive according to both official multilateral evaluations (OECD, 2003: 11) and NGOs (Eurodad 2006: 20).

Research about development is central to DE, especially where it claims to conduct research for global public benefit and poverty reduction. The €13.5 million funding allocated for development-oriented research may be a relatively small proportion of all Irish research funding, but it represents excellent new opportunities to widen the scope of public-funded research to focus on issues of development cooperation. The success of these dedicated development cooperation research grants depends on how closely they fulfil their commendable policy aims.

### **The Demands and Risks of Research**

The new research programmes and agencies also bring considerable additional demands and risks. One of the most problematic aspects of the new research landscape is the model of 'competitive collaboration' demanded by most of the research programmes. Competition is seen as a necessary logic based on the supposition that the best outcomes and 'value for money' arise from market competition. However, underdeveloped infrastructures and the small size of the Irish research sector mean that inter-institutional collaboration is essential to maximise outcomes, counterbalance limitations of scale and prevent replication (O'Sullivan, 2005). Institutions are required to bid competitively against each other for research grants; but they are simultaneously compelled to collaborate in order for their bids to succeed. The Taoiseach has criticised academic institutions for failing to work with each other (Healy 2006), however the research funding mechanism itself precludes institutions from becoming fully cooperative to achieve win-win outcomes and fulfil the policy aims, as the process is predicated on only selected institutions winning.

So far, research funding processes have tended to be unpredictable and lacking in transparency, though the many commissioned reviews and evaluations may lead to gradual learning and improvement. They have taken a stop-start character, punctuated by long delays, 'pauses' and budget uncertainties. Researchers are expected to produce bids in rapid response to unpredictable processes and comply with demanding deadlines, complicated bureaucracy and shifting goalposts. The principal applicants for research funding are academics who are primarily engaged in teaching and this gives rise to tensions that will be examined further in the next section. If a research bid is successful, demanding administrative and managerial roles will immediately ensue. The processes of competitive elimination mean that discouragingly few researchers and a minority of institutions can succeed

in any given funding round. In Cycles 1-3 of PRTL, less than half of the eligible institutions gained any funding (15 out of 35) and the three most elite institutions University College Cork (UCC), University College Dublin (UCD) and Trinity College Dublin received the largest grants (HEA, 2002).

### **Tensions between Research and Teaching**

The growth of research activities has made tensions and compromises between teaching and research more starkly apparent. Academics are now expected to maintain their traditional roles as teachers, but also to be research entrepreneurs, attracting funding, managing research portfolios, supervising researchers, and producing copious evaluation and monitoring reports. Although there is not (yet) an Irish equivalent to the British Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) system, the metrics of academic success are following those of the UK and the rest of the world. What counts is the quantity of research funding awarded, participation in elite research teams and the number of prestigious publications. The embedding of a system based on these criteria has become inescapable as Irish institutions and academics are already part of highly internationalised labour and knowledge markets.

Evidence from the UK suggests that funding policies and management strategies are pushing teaching and research further apart (Jenkins et al., 2007). The increasing importance of research means that attention is pulled away from teaching, the latter getting ‘downgraded’ as a less prestigious activity. The result is a tendency towards a two-tiered system, with research, market priorities and knowledge competition in the dominant position and teaching, social priorities and knowledge sharing relegated to a subordinate space.

Pressures within teaching are intensifying, due to larger student numbers, more courses and increases in higher level postgraduate courses. Participation in third-level education in Ireland has risen to become one of the highest in the OECD - at around 60 percent of school-leavers. The government’s Expert Group on Future Skills Needs suggests that this should be increased by a further 15 percent by 2020 (Flynn 2007). However, as universities constantly expand and take on a permanent growth imperative, there is an overwhelming concern to maintain increasing student recruitment. With new undergraduate entrant numbers remaining static for the past 3 years (HEA, 2007: 5), institutions are increasingly competing against each other for school leavers and trying to broaden enrolment from more ‘non-traditional’ students.

Since the late 1990s, the sector has struggled to cope with a dramatic increase in class sizes, which together with an increasing focus on efficiency and ‘output’ have tended to decrease contact time between teachers and students. This is not an ideal scenario for development educators who privilege critical engagement and individual learning which are better developed in smaller

classes with more contact time. Modularisation and semesterisation have also led to more compact and intensive courses, though these changes also provide more flexibility to bring development education into, and make it relevant to, a greater number of courses.

The drive for student numbers has focused increasingly on the 'value added' of each student. There has been an increased focus on the 'fourth level', with postgraduate enrolments growing at a faster pace than undergraduate enrolments (HEA, 2007: 6). More funding for doctoral students, with the national aim to double postgraduate student numbers by 2013, should mean better complementarities developing between research and teaching. However, the new research funding programmes have led to the establishment of a relatively large number of new Irish research institutes which face considerable sustainability challenges. So far these institutes have engaged in little or no teaching, but an interest in developing professional postgraduate programmes will increase as competition for funding intensifies. There are already significant pressures in terms of space and resources to accommodate research students and activities. For example, HEA and Forfás note that in sociology departments the 'infrastructural issues verge on the insurmountable in terms of the amount and quality of space available in the existing buildings' (2007: 27).

These tensions between research and teaching pose a number of serious challenges. Since the new developments in research funding appear to prioritise marketisation, development educators need to engage more fully with the new research opportunities to drive research in more development friendly directions. Development research is becoming more policy driven, given that investment in research has itself become part of official development policy (DCI, 2003; Irish Aid, 2007). While policy-based research is crucial, there needs to be a balance between policy-based research driven by government agencies and critical engagement with policy that helps advance research, but is not tied to specific policy priorities or government agendas. The disciplines and areas where participatory research methodologies are being advanced may hold particular promise, but this requires an article in itself. The teaching landscape offers some avenues of hope that may complement the re-orientation of research towards a more development friendly direction.

### **Pedagogies of Hope and their Complementarities with Development Education**

DE shares common ground with other types of education that privilege egalitarianism and emancipation such as workers' education, feminist education, environmental education, intercultural education and peace education. The questions that are raised by the changes taking place in higher education also apply in these other fields of emancipatory education. As

critical and emancipatory educators, the process of learning is as important as the content. The skills, values and outcomes promoted by development educators aim to counter passivity, encourage critical reflection and bring about emancipatory action and change. Given the ubiquity of marketisation and managerialism, is it possible that critical reflection might not lead to emancipatory change, but instead result in pessimism and a greater sense of alienation?

Hope for an escape from alienation lies in the possibility of creating greater complementarities between research and new teaching practices. New pedagogical spaces have emerged which make research more central to teaching (e.g. the Reinvention Centre at Warwick University in the UK) (see Jenkins et al., 2007). There are also newly-established centres promoting progressive and innovative learning and teaching practice within the universities previously associated with non-formal education. A familiar local example is the Community Knowledge Initiative/Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at NUI Galway (see Khoo, 2006).

These spaces are useful for exploring the relevance of DE at third level and merit more detailed examination, but only a brief overview is possible within the scope of this article. There is significant advocacy for re-embedding teaching and learning in the wider community context, accompanied by efforts to revitalise the roles of universities as public institutions, embodying human knowledge and values essential to the civility of society (McIlrath and MacLabhrainn, 2007). Such efforts are essential if universities are to play their part in creating an educational culture that challenges pessimism, responds to the challenges of globalisation and shape it for the benefit of all (Leadbetter, quoted in Bourn, 2003; see also Edwards, 2004). An interesting example from the University of Essex shows how community engagement is central to the creation of alternatives to commodified conceptions of learning. The process of re-embedding the learner in the local community took local food and quality of life issues as a starting point. The use of local issues empowered learners to connect to wider environmental and justice debates by first addressing local forms of alienation (Strange, 2005).

While these initiatives may provide 'pedagogies of hope', the danger is that tensions may lead to an outright split into a two tier system, if efforts are not made to develop greater complementarities between research and teaching. Research is an important area of complementarity, linking DE to the wider body of educational theory and critique. Bourn (2003) maintains that we need more theory about DE and suggests that DE has tended to become somewhat self-referential. At third level, DE has yet to become central to both teachers and researchers. Development educators will have to work to highlight the opportunities for researchers to engage with issues of global justice and empower them to develop research that contributes to the theory and practice of critical education, and to the stock of knowledge that

enhances the public good. DE for researchers involves the conscientisation and mobilisation of researchers to engage in research that can benefit the poor and enhance sustainability and justice. Research funding for public good needs to be defended and expanded where possible, especially in the areas of science and technology where the dominance of commercially oriented research has been noted.

## Conclusion

The rich intellectual tradition of progressive and adult pedagogy places great emphasis on critical learning and the creation of open and democratic spaces of learning. Yet the transformation of the third-level landscape seems to be taking us simultaneously nearer and further away from those ideals. The expansion of research has driven third-level institutions towards a more complex set of aims and practices. The growth and expansion of higher education has provided new opportunities for development educators to communicate their ideas and values and find a place for them within research and teaching. However, these core meanings, values and practices are significantly challenged by the contradictions of academic capitalism, the demands and risks of research and the tensions between research and teaching.

Research intensification has been accompanied by many other new demands on those who play multiple roles as educators and researchers. The core values within development studies and DE are moving away from economism and increasingly towards humanism and ethics (e.g. Gasper, 2005). This contrasts with the marketised and managerialist concerns beginning to predominate within both research and teaching at third level. Capitalist education embodies competitive, monopolistic and unequal ways of working that are deeply at odds with DE's traditional allegiances to democratising, inclusive and egalitarian values, practices and behaviours. For development educators such as Bourn and Faul, the crucial and inescapable questions are about how development educators can respond creatively and innovatively to the processes of globalisation. Is education in this new era 'one of resistance/transformation/accommodation to globalisation or something yet to be defined?' (Bourn 2006: 5, 9).

Despite the tensions that might ensue, the evolution of third level DE and the incorporation of a DE research agenda is, on balance, a welcome set of opportunities for the third level sector. However, this development may also have unintended effects on the ability of non-governmental and civil society actors in DE to conduct their own independent and 'bottom-up' research as funding becomes more programmatic and oriented towards third level institutions. As research funding is further channelled through policy-oriented programmes and competitive bidding processes, it becomes harder for smaller organisations to compete for funding and this could lead to some

tensions emerging between these smaller organisations and the universities.

In contrast to the tensions and demands of programmatic funded research, a 'barefoot' approach might seem attractive. Barefoot development practice is so-called as it signifies a back-to-basics, bottom-up approach. In the context of DE and research, it could signify a sense of academic freedom and freedom from frustrating forms of bureaucracy, managerialism and top-down control. Conversely, such an approach might lead to marginalisation and the lack of relevance, credibility and resources.

The scramble for research funding undoubtedly leads to narrowing-down and processes of elimination since research funding is an inescapably competitive process. It seems striking how little critical debate there is in Ireland about the new research funding and wider processes of marketisation and competition in higher education and research. Critical debate is crucial for development educators since the tendencies of funded research may not fit well with the open, critical and dialogic approaches favoured within DE. Critique is the essential tool for overcoming alienation, and for achieving the broader humanistic vision of education discussed at the beginning of this article. There is perhaps an inherent risk with any attempt to 'mainstream' DE as it places high hopes on emancipatory and resistive pedagogies that are innately sceptical towards the 'mainstream'.

Ideally, DE should aspire to 'cultivate humanity', producing well-educated citizens of the world who are able to place the needs of all humanity above their particular loyalties of nationality, religion, ethnicity, gender and class (Nussbaum, 1997: 9). Such aspirations are not easy within a higher education system that arguably reproduces social divisions and works through exclusive and competitive practices. The challenge is to find a path through the contradictions in the everyday work of universities: the teaching, research and public roles of academics need to be brought together in ways that complement each other rather than pull them apart.

## References

- An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern (2005) 'Lisbon Agenda - Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs - National Reform Programme, Ireland', Dublin: Department of the Taoiseach, available: <http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/index.asp?docID=2264>, (accessed 6 July 2007).
- Atlantic Philanthropies (2007), available: [http://www.atlanticphilanthropies.org/grantees/statistics/historical\\_statistics](http://www.atlanticphilanthropies.org/grantees/statistics/historical_statistics), (accessed 6 July 2007).
- Bourn, D (2003) 'Towards a theory of Development Education', *The Development Education Journal*, Volume 10, Number 1, pp3-6.
- Bourn, D (2006) 'Development Education: From Practice to a Theory of Learning', Background Paper for Development Education Conference, London: IOE, November 20/21st 2006.
- Cordis (2007) Seventh Research Framework Programme, available: [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html), (accessed 7 July 2007).
- DCI (2003) 'Deepening Public Understanding of International Development, Development Education Strategy Plan 2003-2005', Dublin: DCI.
- Edwards, M (2004) *Future Positive International Cooperation in the 21st Century*, London: Earthscan.
- Eurodad (2006) 'EU Aid, Genuine Leadership or Misleading Figures? An Independent Analysis of European Government's Aid Levels', Brussels: Eurodad, available: <http://www.eurodad.org>, (accessed 6 July 2007).
- Faul, M (2007) 'Read my lips, it's not just the economy: reframing education', *The Development Education Journal*, 2007 Volume 13, Number 3, pp. 9-12.
- Flynn, S (2007) 'Humanities central to intellectual and cultural life - report', *Irish Times*, 14 March.
- Gasper, D (2004) *The Ethics of Development*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- HEA (2002) 'PRTL Programme Details by Theme, Cycles 1-3', available: <http://www.heai.ie/index.cfm/page/publications/category/143/section/details/id/745>, (accessed 8 July 2007).
- HEA and Forfás (2007) *Research Infrastructure in Ireland: Building for Tomorrow. Report of the International Steering Committee*, Dublin: Higher Education Authority.

HEA (2004) *The Programme for Third Level Institutions [PRTLII] Impact Assessment: Report by the International Assessment Committee*, Dublin: Higher Education Authority, Dublin.

HEA (2007) *Higher Education Key Facts and Figures 2005/06*, Dublin: Higher Education Authority, available: <http://www.heai.ie/uploads/pdf/Higher%20Education%20Key%20Facts%20&%20Figures%2005-06.pdf>, (accessed 6 July 2007).

Healy, C (2006) 'Ahern says third-level institutions should cooperate on key projects', *Irish Times*, 13 February.

Irish Aid (2007) 'Promoting Public Engagement for Development, Draft Development Education Strategy Plan, 2007 – 2011', Dublin: Irish Aid.

Irish Aid (2006) *White Paper on Irish Aid*, Dublin: Government of Ireland.

Jenkins, M and Mackenzie, N (2007) 'Summary of content discussions for the Development Education Journal on 'Responding to Changes in the Global Economy'', *The Development Education Journal*, Volume 13, Number 3, 2007 pp. 4-5.

Jenkins, A, Healey, M and Zetter, R (2007) 'Linking teaching and research in disciplines and departments', York: Higher Education Academy.

Khoo, S (2006) 'Development Education, Citizenship and Civic Engagement at Third Level and beyond in the Republic of Ireland', in *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*, Issue 3, pp. 26-39.

Nussbaum, Martha (1997) *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defence of Reform in Liberal Education*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

O'Sullivan, G (2005) 'Ireland's Programme of Research in Third Level Institutions', in *PEB Exchange: the Journal of the OECD Programme on Educational Building*, Issue 54, pp. 13-16.

OECD (2006) *Reviews of National Policies for Education: Higher Education in Ireland*, Brussels: OECD Education Committee.

OECD (2003) DAC Peer Review, Ireland, available: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/25/43/21651179.pdf>, (accessed 6 July 2006).

OECD (2004) 'Review of National Policies for Education. Review of Higher Education in Ireland, Examiners Report', available: <http://www.heai.ie>, (accessed 6 July 2015).

Royal Irish Academy (2007) 'Advancing Humanities and Social Sciences Research in Ireland', Dublin: Royal Irish Academy.

SFI (2004) 'Vision 2004-2008 People, Ideas and Partnerships for a Globally Competitive Irish Research System', available: <http://www.sfi.ie>, (accessed 10 July 2007).

Sidhu, RK (2006) *Universities and Globalization – To Market*, New Jersey and London: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates.

Skilbeck, M (2001) 'The University Challenged: A Review of International Trends and Issues with Particular Reference to Ireland' available: [http://www.iua.ie/publications/documents/publications/2001/Report\\_11.pdf](http://www.iua.ie/publications/documents/publications/2001/Report_11.pdf), (accessed 6 July 2007).

Slaughter, S and Leslie, L (1999) *Academic Capitalism: Politics, Policies and the Entrepreneurial University*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.  
Strange, M (2005) 'Empowering university students as global citizens', *The Development Education Journal*, Volume 12, Number 1, pp. 25-26.

UNESCO (2003) 'Synthesis Report on Trends and Developments in Higher Education since the World Conference on Higher Education (1998-2003)', available: <http://www.unesco.org>, (accessed 6 July 2006).

## GLOBALISING HIGHER EDUCATION: CHALLENGES AND CONTRADICTIONS

**Niamh Gaynor**

### **Introduction**

Higher education institutions in Ireland, as elsewhere, are facing severe challenges on a number of fronts. On the one hand, increasing enrolment figures coupled with dwindling state support are leaving higher education institutions facing severe financial challenges; on the other, the very idea and fundamental role of higher education is being challenged through the shifting nature of knowledge(s) and the changing needs of an increasingly complex global society.

Within this context, a considerable debate has grown on the impact of globalisation on higher education. One aspect of this debate, played out in the pages of *The Irish Times* (Garvin, 2010; von Prondynski, 2010), is the increasing corporatisation of management structures and practices within higher education institutions. The other inter-related aspect relates to the nature and function of higher education itself in an increasingly complex, globalised world. In this article I focus on the latter. Following developments in higher education over the past four decades, I highlight some fundamental challenges and contradictions in the globalisation of higher education in Ireland. Specifically, I suggest that the combination of a prioritisation of the exigencies of the knowledge economy with the neglect of development and global education within third level leaves students and graduates ill-prepared to mediate, negotiate and challenge the increasingly complex, global society in which they live and work.

### **Globalising Higher Education**

From the mid-1990s to 2006 the Irish economy underwent a period of very rapid growth with the average growth rate of over 7 percent per annum, more than double that of the United States (US) and close to triple the average growth rate in the Eurozone (Ryan, et al., 2008). Unemployment fell to 0 per cent with over 600,000 jobs (an increase of 50 per cent on 1994 levels) created between 1994 and 2004. While the causes of this transformation are still the subject of much debate, there is agreement that the key factor driving the country's economic success was the attraction of almost 1,000 foreign-owned firms. While political stability coupled with a range of favourable tax incentives and a relatively low cost base combined to produce a climate attractive to investment, higher education institutions have also been identified as a key actor promoting the country's successful insertion into the global economy (Fitzgerald, 2000).

The contribution of higher education in this regard took two forms: significant increases in training and skills developments in targeted areas from the 1970s onwards; and targeted funding for research and development beginning in the early 2000s. Since the late 1960s, a major thrust of national economic policy has been to dramatically enhance the country's national technical, technological and innovative skill base through increased public support to a growing number of higher education institutions (White, 2000). In line with trends across the European Union (EU), enrolment and participation rates at higher level increased significantly from the 1970s following targeted policy developments aimed at meeting the changing labour force requirements of a late-industrialising society. Admission rates in 2003 and 2004 were well over twice the rate of those in 1980 (O'Connell, et al., 2006: 314), and in 2008, 34 percent of the labour force in Ireland (aged 25-64) had completed some form of higher education, compared to 4 percent in the early 1970s (NCC, 2009: 9).

Although this new direction gave rise to considerable debate, most notably about the merits of liberal education versus a more vocational role for higher education (White, 2000: 191-193), by the mid-1990s these training versus education debates fell by the wayside as the dramatic upturn in the economy highlighted the need for a range of new skill sets and expertise. The influential strategy document produced in 1996 by Forfás, the policy advisory and coordination board for industrial development, science and technology, emphasised that the main determinant of the competitiveness of the enterprise sector was the skills and knowledge of the workforce. As White notes, 'The [Forfás] report was indicative of how much the education system had become central to the success of the state's industrial policy' (2000: 192).

### **Globalising Society**

The result of this strategy has been not just a globalisation of the national economy, but also of society more broadly. The rapidly changing face(s) of modern Ireland, at work and at leisure, is now readily apparent to all. The most recent census figures available on population and demographics document the increasing diversity of the island's population with over 10 percent of what is classified as 'non-Irish' living in Ireland in 2006 (CSO, 2009). With foreign nationals accounting for 8.1 percent of the national labour force in 2005 (NESC, 2006: 21 – Table 2.3), and over half (54.3 percent) of immigrants estimated to have third-level qualifications (NESC, 2006: 23), it is clear that many Irish graduates (who account for just over a quarter of the national population (NESC, 2006: 23)) will, even if they remain in Ireland, come into regular contact in their working lives with people from different backgrounds, cultures and life experiences. This likelihood is multiplied by the extremely high proportion of foreign owned companies in the country, with foreign-owned (and often managed) firms accounting for 50 percent of

all manufacturing employment in Ireland by the early 2000s (O’Riain, 2004).

In this context, fundamental questions arise in relation to how well Irish higher education institutions equip students with capacities to comprehend, negotiate and play active roles within this globalised society. What do Irish students and graduates know and understand of the diverse backgrounds of their managers, co-workers and friends? What do they understand of the circumstances that brought them here, that encourage them to stay, and perhaps, that thwart them from leaving? Has their university education assisted them in critically analysing the global context in which the companies in which they work operate? In short, how well do they understand and engage with the interrelated, globalised society in which we all now live?

The findings from two surveys, conducted in 2002 and 2006 respectively, suggest not terribly well. The principal finding of the 2002 survey was the lack of detailed knowledge of global issues among the Irish populace at large (Weafer, 2002). The preferred source of information on global issues for 92 percent of the 1,000 people surveyed was the media (2002: 11). Moreover, over 50 percent of those surveyed are reported to have found educational institutions unreliable in the information they provide on global issues (2002: 13). Following on from this study, the 2006 survey, carried out among 900 students across all universities in the republic, found ‘little evidence of any sophisticated understanding of development issues, or any capacity to rank different explanations of development’ (Connolly, Doyle & Dwyer, 2008: 226). Analysing the survey findings, the researchers report that, once again, the media (television at 83 percent of respondents, followed by newspapers at 68 percent) proves the most popular source of information on global issues, although 50 percent also cite their educational institutions as important (2008: 219). Interestingly, these latter findings resonate with those conducted among university students elsewhere. Lunn (2008: 236-237) cites similar findings from studies carried out in the UK, Denmark, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Sweden and the US where students are again found to have a poor knowledge of contemporary global issues, current affairs, and other people, places and cultures. These findings indicate that the time has come to re-engage in debate on the role and relevance of higher education in this contemporary context. To answer this question we need to interrogate more broadly the role of higher education in society.

### **What is Higher about Higher Education? Commonalities with Development Education**

According to one of the leading international scholars on higher education, Ronald Barnett, at the heart of higher education lies the development of students’ critical abilities (1995; 2005). Students need to be supported and encouraged in developing faculties to critically mediate, negotiate, and engage

with the increasingly complex world in which they live. As Barnett states:

“students on courses of higher education should be encouraged to enter into a continuing conversation, be prepared to take on the point of view of others and become comfortable in conducting that critical dialogue with themselves” (1995: 27).

In a later paper dealing specifically with post-modern challenges to the universality of knowledge, Barnett (2005) develops this core dimension of critical thinking more fully. He argues:

“in a postmodern world, universals are not at an end. The new universal is precisely the capacity to cope, to prosper and to delight in a world in which there are no universals... And it is a task of – and challenge to – the university to provide those capacities” (2005: 794).

Barnett advocates that research and teaching within contemporary higher education institutions (in all faculties and departments) take what he terms ‘an ontological turn’ (2005: 795). This entails a shift ‘from knowledge to being: instead of knowing the world, being-in-the-world has to take primary place in the conceptualisations that inform university teaching’ (2005: 795). In practice, this means equipping students with the competencies and capacities to comprehend, analyse and critically function in the increasingly interconnected yet complex world in which they do or will live and work.

In order to do this, students’ knowledge of and engagement with the world necessarily needs to move beyond the traditional parameters of the nation state. As Robertson and Dale argue, a critical approach to contemporary education entails an engagement with the wider challenges posed by contemporary globalised, and globally driven, transformations within the field of education. Specifically they argue for a:

“...need to get beyond framings and analysis of education policymaking that continue to assume education to be a national enterprise taking place within what has historically been called the ‘education sector’” (Robertson & Dale, 2009: 24).

This is because, they argue, the persistent appearance of national autonomy serves to conceal the real sources of development, underdevelopment, knowledge and power within globalised society.

Following this, a truly globalised higher education system has much in common with the aims and ethos of development education which also puts critical thinking at its core. While both the concept and practice of development education, as with other forms of education, remain somewhat

contested (see Khoo, 2003 for a good overview of different conceptions), there is agreement on the importance of this critical dimension as a precursor to action towards social change. For Irish Aid, development education is defined as follows:

“...an educational process aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world in which we live. It seeks to engage people in analysis, reflection and action for local and global citizenship and participation. It is about supporting people in understanding, and in acting to transform the social, cultural, political and economic structures which affect their lives and others at personal, community, national and international levels” (Irish Aid, 2003).

This clearly highlights the commonalities in aims and ethos between the two educational forms. Yet, to date, development education at a formal sectoral level has remained largely focused on primary and secondary-level educational institutions and systems. At this crucial time when the impact of globalisation on higher education (together with society more broadly) is being challenged, and when the relevance (and associated financial support) of higher education is in question, it is time for development education policymakers and practitioners to come together with higher education authorities with a view to truly globalising higher education, shifting boundaries and borders – both geographic and conceptual – to build synergies and work together to equip students with the competencies and capacities to comprehend, analyse and critically function in the increasingly interconnected world in which we all now live.

## Conclusion

The changing faces, challenges and opportunities offered by an increasingly diverse, globalised society require new thinking on the traditional boundaries of development education. Relegating development education within higher level institutions to small numbers of specialist courses, staff and low-tier journals dealing with issues and problems ‘over there’ is no longer a viable option. ‘Over there’ is now here. Having played a critical role in building Ireland’s globalised ‘knowledge economy’, the challenge is now for higher education and development education institutions, agencies and specialists alike to address the other side of the coin, working together to build a globalised ‘knowledge society’ in equal measure.

## References

- Barnett, R (1995) *Improving Higher Education – Total Quality Care*, 2nd edition, Buckingham: The Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press.
- Barnett, R (2005) 'Recapturing the Universal in the University', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol. 37, 6, pp. 785-797.
- Central Statistics Office Ireland (2009) website, available: <http://www.cso.ie/statistics/popnclssbyreligionandnationality2006.htm> (accessed 22 December 2009).
- Clancy, P (1997) 'Higher Education in the Republic of Ireland: Participation and Performance', *Higher Education Quarterly*, Vol. 51, 1, pp. 86-106.
- Connolly, E, Doyle, J and Dwyer, F (2008) 'Public opinion and development issues: A survey of Irish university student opinions', *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, Vol. 19, pp. 209-226.
- Fitzgerald, J (2000) 'The Story of Ireland's Failure – and Belated Success' in B Nolan, P J O'Connell and C T Whelan (eds.) *Bust to Boom? The Irish Experience of Growth and Inequality*, Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, pp. 27-57.
- Garvin, T (2010) 'Grey philistines taking over our universities', *The Irish Times*, 1 May.
- Irish Aid (2003) Deepening Public Understanding of International Development - Development Education Strategy Plan 2003-2005, Irish Aid, Dublin.
- Khoo, S (2006) 'Development education, Citizenship and Civic Engagement at Third Level and Beyond in the Republic of Ireland' in *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 3, Autumn 2006, available: <http://www.developmenteducationreview.com/issue3-focus3> (accessed 20 December 2009).
- Lunn, J (2008) 'Global perspectives in higher education: Taking the agenda forward in the United Kingdom', *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Vol. 12, 3, pp. 231-254.
- National Competitive Council (2009) 'Statement on Education and Training', Dublin: National Competitiveness Council (NCC).
- National Economic and Social Council (2006) 'Migration Policy, Report No. 115', Dublin: National Economic and Social Council (NESC).
- O'Connell, P, McCoy, S and Clancy, D (2006) 'Who went to college? Socio-economic inequality in entry to higher education in the Republic of Ireland in 2004', *Higher Education Quarterly*, Vol. 60, 4, pp. 312-332.

O'Riain, S (2004) *The Politics of High Tech Growth: Developmental Network States in The Global Economy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Robertson, S L and Dale, I R (2009) 'The World Bank, the IMF and the possibilities of critical education' in M Apple, W Au and L Gandin (eds.) *International Handbook of Critical Education*, Routledge: Oxford, pp 23-35.

Ryan, J, Wafer, B and FitzGerald, M (2008) 'University-industry collaboration: an issue for Ireland as an economy with a high dependence on academic research', *Research Evaluation*, Vol. 17, 4, pp. 294-302.

Von Prondynski, F (2010) 'A "grey philistine" on why Prof Garvin is wrong', *The Irish Times*, 11 May.

Weafer, J A (2002) 'Attitudes towards Development Cooperation in Ireland', Dublin: MRBI/Irish Aid.

White, T (2000) *Investing in People: Higher Education in Ireland from 1960 to 2000*, Dublin: Institute of Public Administration,.

## MICRO-DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AND THE POTENTIAL ROLE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Gerard McCann

### Introduction

Since the 1990s, international economic development policy has increasingly been rebalanced towards transnational corporate and macro-economic actions with priorities being based largely on gross domestic product (GDP) growth patterns and structural adjustment programmes. The emphasis has been placed on commercial growth without adequate attention being given to the potential of the sociological side of development. The link between the empowerment of local communities and economic regeneration is often lost in neo-functionalist mechanisms for integrating peripheral economies within the global market system. Indeed, various aspects of the global development system have brought development policy and aid support in general into question with exogenous factors impacting heavily on the development of poor countries (Glennie, 2008; Moyo, 2010; Karlan and Appel, 2011).

From the perspective of the recipients of these policies, functional interpretations and activities need to do much more to encompass society in general and, as Amartya Sen contended in *Development as Freedom*, to facilitate a process of emancipation. For many it needs to be as straightforward as constructing policies that will contribute to poverty alleviation. Abhijit Banerjee and Ester Duflo, the authors of *Poor Economics*, presented the problem succinctly:

“if we could give up the lofty goals and empty promises and focus all our energies on the concrete steps we are able to take here and now to improve the lives of the poor worldwide, we would bring some real comfort to the lives of millions” (2012: 13).

Ultimately any pro-poor definition of development is about empowering people to gain control over their own destinies, while enabling them to shape their own cultural, social and economic environments. From this perspective, development – a process of economic adaptation – should be primarily life enhancing as well as being structurally supportive and sustainable. A corollary of this principle is that the voices influencing policy design should come from those most affected by it. Taking a broad survey of policy and practice, this article will look at alternative economic models of poverty alleviation, focusing on community sourced initiatives. It will also highlight the potential role of community-linked institutions, such as universities, in providing a hub for micro-economic development in marginalised and peripheral areas.

## Redefining the Micro

Activities that promote empowerment in local economies can have a significant impact on the life chances of individuals and families in highly vulnerable regions. Increasing evidence from across the developing world would suggest that the nurturing of micro-initiatives in particular can stimulate growth patterns that assist self-reliance and community development for the most vulnerable (Madeley, 2000: 73-90; Collier, 2007: 79-96; Armendáriz and Morduch, 2012: 57-85). The potential for individuals and communities to control economic activity at a localised point can invariably only come about at a micro-level, giving social enterprise a peculiar place in the roll out of economic agency. In effect micro-development – locally supported economic activity within a partnership framework – remains one of the few proven mechanisms bringing tangible economic benefits to the most marginal of communities.

Conversely, macro-development by and large facilitates state and corporate actors in the development process. Indeed, the inability of many regions to escape spatial poverty cycles would suggest that the main beneficiaries of many structural adjustment initiatives are not the target communities, but the actual purveyors of investment. That is, large scale aid and development operations often miss the most vulnerable in a race to support the governmental and corporate elements in an economy, seeking short term political objectives, without recognition of the importance of community development in enhancing the potential of those working in locally managed (often informal) economies. It is arguably in this environment where micro-development initiatives can have a direct and immediate impact. Yujiro Hayami and Yoshihisa Godo, in *Development Economics*, put it another way:

“Hierarchical organizations, including not only firms but also government agencies and non-governmental organizations, are likely to fall into functional disorder with a high incidence of moral hazards, unless the community mechanism of cooperation is incorporated in some form or another” (2005: 316).

These ‘community mechanisms’ are one answer to the inequities that often arise from the macro-development process and include, for example, cooperative forms such as social economy initiatives, educational institutions and church networks already positioned to take local interests forward. The hub for growth already exists, but needs the catalysts of smarter investment and deeper disbursement.

The principle of subsidiarity has been the mainstay of European development since the inception of the European Community, locating policy and decision making as close as possible to the people who are being affected by those decisions. Applying this simple principle in its broadest

sense to global development practice would bring the responsibility and agency for economic regeneration to those sections of the community who are most affected, positively or adversely, by investment. It suggests that if external investment is to sufficiently influence change and growth, then those subjected to the intervention should have a leadership role in its design and management. This could mean a targeted series of initiatives that would progressively and sensitively encourage the community sector's economic strategies.

Governments often step in to organise at a micro-level when the community actors are in all likelihood in a better position to locate contextually appropriate opportunities. As experience has shown in industries such as the copper mines of Zambia or the cotton fields of India, where unregulated corporate interests are involved it is often to the detriment of the most susceptible to economic adjustment. Entrusting development to local agency with reference to community development arguably brings forward a different dynamic in terms of actual impact and the democratic decentralisation of investment. Jain, Krishnamurty and Tripathi noted this very succinctly in *Grass Without Roots*: 'the basic reason for the failure of rural development and poverty alleviation programmes is the exclusion of the people from participation in the development process' (1985: 15).

Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union presents what is considered a prerequisite for policy design for most developed countries and certainly for all of the former colonial powers:

"Under the principle of subsidiarity... the Union shall act only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States, either at central level or at regional and local level, but can rather, by reason of the scale or effects of the proposed action, be better achieved at Union [macro] level".

In other words, actions should be consensual and start with the beneficiaries before working upwards towards intra-state and transnational actors. Giving the local voice primacy is accepted here as the most effective means of developing peripheral economies.

This type of inclusivity anticipates what Denis O'Hearn labelled the 'sociological' approach to economic development, where a socially focused partnership works to integrate external and indigenous elements to benefit the recipient communities. For O'Hearn, the potential of community development has been historically frustrated by ideologically driven structural strategies that have prioritised donors at the expense of target communities. In particular he remained resolutely critical of orthodox, market-fixated methods of investment, viewing them as having longitudinal detrimental effects on the most impoverished communities:

“In countries where aggressive free-trade policies were imposed, the result was often a diminution in the well-being of large segments of the population, who lost even the most meagre safety nets in housing or health policies, while paying greater proportions of their incomes for basic necessities such as water and energy” (2009: 101).

The geography of development and the extent of divergence between regions provide ample evidence to verify O’Hearn’s claims. In practice an economic development model that may work in the suburbs of Oxford or Chicago, cannot possibly be equally applicable as development architecture for the townships of South Africa, the Kibera compound, the slums of Kolkata, or the Gaza Strip. One Western designed free-trade model cannot fit all contexts, where geo-economic factors differ absolutely. The contextual compliances in a myriad of development scenarios plainly do not exist for that peculiarly Western ideological prescription more recently described as neo-liberalism.

### **Component Aspects**

From the evidence, micro-development would appear to provide a mechanism that can tailor investment and partnership in an empowering, regionally based and socially sensitive manner (ILO, 2012a). With ideological baggage stripped from the process and the exigencies of subsidiarity applied in an inclusive sense, there emerges the possibility of accountable development strategies. Pioneered by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) as an extension of successful micro-credit projects, micro-development strategies aim to contribute to the generation of pro-poor economic growth and quality employment through integrated programmes for the development of micro and small (often non-governmental organisation [NGO]-led) enterprises that focus on social as well as business development. Projects are mostly partnership based and are often transnational, institution to institution, or NGO to NGO. Included in this development methodology are initiatives aimed at the reduction in poverty and unemployment which also directly contribute to economic sustainability.

Given that in most developing regions micro and small enterprises (MSEs) account for most economic activity, their role in regeneration needs to be acknowledged and supported within the indigenous context. In recent years the ILO has highlighted this sector for investment and demonstrated an understanding of the spatial complexities of community development for those wanting to participate in business in a developing region. However, while acknowledging their importance to societies prone to poverty cycles, MSEs face what the ILO terms ‘significant structural, fiscal and non-fiscal issues and challenges’. These challenges include: restricted access to credit; transport constraints; a technological deficit with importing competitors; limited market access; restrictions on management, enterprise and book-

keeping training; a lack of statutory transparency when it comes to quality assurance and legal restrictions; a need for networking opportunities; and limited opportunities for outsourcing. In micro-development these obstacles can be seen to be the anticipated challenges for the foreseeable future (ILO, 2012a, 2012b).

Micro-development initiatives are common enough, but analysis and evaluation are badly needed to enhance evidence of the potential of this model. Initiatives vary in scope from country to country, but have generic objectives that can best be viewed as organic economic development partnerships. Some MSEs offer their own definitions of what they believe micro-development has to offer. The NGO Micro-development Partners defines it as:

“Building partnerships with those in the developing communities so that the real needs of the local people can be discerned, and so that they participate in determining their development priorities; in our own community in order to foster increased understanding of our mutual development needs in both developed and developing countries; amongst global organisations involved in development initiatives” (MP, 2013).

With a more specific social enterprise remit, the Nepalese, United Nations supported, micro-development agency Medep states that its objective is:

“to help low-income families become entrepreneurs, promote the development of their enterprises, and then create a strong partnership between consumers of micro-enterprise products and services and local service delivery institutions. This is expected to boost micro-entrepreneurs to create a new and dynamic business sector... The development aim of the programme is to contribute to the government’s efforts to reduce poverty in the country. Its goals are two fold: one to reduce poverty among low-income families in rural areas, and the other is to ensure the institutional development and capacity building of local service delivery organisations to work as catalysts in the development of rural micro-enterprise sectors” (Medep, 2010: 4-7; Medep, 2013).

In India the government enacted the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act (2006) which encompasses activities across the enterprise spectrum, including social economy initiatives. The Act – although limited to manufacturing and services with restricted incomes – has generated recognition of the scope of community economic activity. Four key facets emerge from the various interpretations of micro-development. The

first is mutuality, *partnership* which could be local or global; the second is the need for *capacity* building for initiatives and productivity; third, not to exclude any sectors of the community from participating, *inclusion*; and finally, there is the urgency of putting in place effective strategies for *poverty alleviation*.

Collectively these actions represent a base line for micro-development in its most integrated sense. Rasigan Maharajh, Alioune Sall and Geci Karuri-Sebina, put it bluntly:

“it is critical to ensure that development paths are inclusive, both for efficiency as well as humanitarian and security reasons. Systems of innovation have to be relevant and accessible to the broad base of the population, not only by addressing issues of basic need (health, energy, food, water), but also in appealing to the globalised aspirations of youth and communities” (2012: 155).

The social obligations of micro-development introduce a clause into economic development that can help to address localised welfare provision deficits.

### **Precedents to Date**

The most familiar examples of micro-development across the developing world have been the micro-credit movement, gender based investment initiatives, cooperatives, educational and training partnerships, the agricultural pooling of resources, small business start-ups and a variety of (Information Technology) IT projects. Collectively these represent the weight of micro-development enterprises. The potential is evident in each of these manifestations as well as others not mentioned and are recognisable as micro-development. Conversely, state and international investment in these sectors has been largely disparate, sporadic, uncoordinated, and the lack of it has been a further obstacle to sustainable growth.

Central to the management of micro-development initiatives has been the understanding that the people involved and their trust underwrite effectiveness and productivity. The process is derived from business theory that is prominent in many social democratic economic models: that the quality of the working environment and an adequate standard of living for employees are implicit to productivity and growth. As is expected in the majority of more economically developed countries (MEDCs), safe working environments and workers' positive experiences can enhance productivity in whatever sector involved. Motivation, morale, collaboration, a work-life balance, rights and strategic influence - all of which are considered good practice in the workplace in developed countries - are implicit to any productive working environment. What is expected by populations in MEDCs should be a realistic aspiration for workers in least developed countries (LDCs) also, and should be invested in accordingly.

Micro-development initiatives offer a unique opportunity with regard to company operations in that with small, indigenous bases, the involvement of the staff in the creation of conducive working environments is easier to achieve than top-down corporate structuring imposed from foreign headquarters. At its core it means investment in the staff (Thirlwall, 2011: 236-237). The ILO suggests a three-pronged approach to creating a conducive enterprise environment in developing regions, based on: first, awareness raising, collecting and disseminating best practice, knowledge of case studies and demonstration workplaces; and second, an implementation system that would substantiate gains and provide a platform for technical advancement. This aspect is intended to work toward the clustering of enterprises for strategic development. Finally, research, analysis and networking; generating good practice to build on improved working conditions while consolidating productivity (ILO, 2012c).

### **Spatial Inequalities**

One aspect of economic development that has come sharply into focus since the onset of the current global depression has been the differentiation of opportunities between communities and regions – the spatial gap that accentuates global inequalities. The stress that has been placed on indigenous and community based economies has to an extent isolated many in informal sectors, those on the periphery of more manageable, or taxable, transactions. Literally millions of people reside in this economic space below the formal economy. They are consequently not encountered by formal structures due to the nature of their activities and the limited revenue involved. Acknowledging local economic development (LED) micro-development initiatives as integral to the regeneration of an economic base and nurturing this third sector as a means of stimulating economic activity contributes to the growth cycle.

One key reason for acting through this non-governmental, non-corporate, third level is that it can utilise local resources and knowledge to encourage employment creating activities. It can become a catalyst for organic business and a framework for market enhancement that is appropriate to the context. Ultimately, such strategies are about building local capacity for sustainable economic development. In this, it should necessarily incorporate planning and targeted investment, which is something that external agents could assist with, be it through university links, NGO partnerships or a community-to-community (MEDCs-LDCs) transfer of skills.

In recent years the ILO, along with other funders, have taken positive actions to support local projects through orchestrating policy adaptation for planning and maximising the potential of any investment. This has helped to bring various stakeholders together to work out appropriate relevant schemes for business incubation via MSEs. It has also meant that a conversation on micro-initiatives has been taking place at a local level. Working ‘from below’, a

more consensual approach to strategic investment and subsidiarity can occur. Furthermore, scrutiny of local enterprise, coupled with experience of good practice, can provide a catalyst for strategising within the local environment. This involves searching out economic activity and labour options to assist with capacity building, including training and skills enhancement for those willing to advance down this route. The demand and supply of goods and services could also be consolidated within different contexts. As the ILO notes, support for this should include:

“The strengthening of an enabling environment for micro, small and medium enterprises at the local level...formalization among entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship training and leadership, value chain upgrading, business development services and access to finance” (ILO, 2012a).

Beyond this initial integration into the formal economy there needs to be the adaptation of social security provision for those involved and risk assessment to ensure that the individuals and families who have come forward to participate in micro-schemes are not adversely affected by their enterprise.

### **Micro-Credit Movement**

The most prominent of the micro-initiatives has been the micro-credit movement which has helped in certain contexts to give families and communities sustainable economic activity. There are estimated to be over 3,000 micro-finance institutions globally attracting in the region of 100 million people in some of the poorest communities on earth. Where successful they are noted for the trustworthiness of the transfer of funds and the developmental influence on family networks and women in particular. Using the example of the Grameen ('village') Bank in Bangladesh, A.P. Thirwall in *Economics of Development* comments:

“All credit transactions are discussed openly, so there is complete transparency concerning what is going on. There can be no ‘cover-ups’ and no corruption. The record of repayment to the Grameen Bank is close to 98 per cent of loans; far better than the record of repayment to the commercial banking system where bad debts are rife” (2011: 403).

In 2003 this micro-lender alone had over three million members and across Bangladesh there were over ten million members of micro-credit organisations who would not be considered wealthy enough - those the international financial system labels 'the unbankable' - to join normal banking services. With outreach to the poor being an implicit principle of the micro-credit

movement, the potential to give marginalised communities a lifeline is very evident. The introduction of micro-credit in many cases gives the poor access to finance with the objective of investing to participate in the local economy in a manageable way. Backed up with technical support on small business activity it provides collateral and employment in sectors of the community that have historically been excluded from commercial activity. It has been particularly beneficial to women and women's groups in communities where small business start-ups and cooperatives can be a means of escaping poverty and food insecurity.

While there have been more recent adaptations to try and integrate the initiatives into the activities of the global banking system, those remaining loyal to the integrity of the pro-poor micro-credit model maintain a positive intervention in poverty alleviation. A current expansion of the model is the broader and more formal micro-finance, as De Aghion and Morduch explain in *The Economics of Microfinance*:

“Microfinance presents itself as the latest solution to the age-old challenge of finding a way to combine the banks’ resources with the local informational and cost advantages of neighbours and moneylenders. Like traditional banks, microfinance institutions can bring in resources from outside the community. Microfinance is not the first attempt to do this, but it is by far the most successful” (2005: 8).

A further precedent comes from Latin America. In a report for Women in Development Europe (WIDE), Patricia Muñoz Cabrera documented evidence on the role women are playing in constructing alternatives to the neoliberal economic model at the macro and micro levels, including attempts to create a women's social economy network as a means for micro-development. The concentration on women's organisations is important in this process because of the organic potential of family and community ties in regeneration, with women empowered. Drawing on the work of WIDE in this regard Cabrera's conclusion is telling: ‘although alternatives to hegemonic models take a long time before yielding concrete results at the macro level, the thinking and acting to transform unequal patterns of production and consumption has already begun’ (Cabrera, 2012: 84; [www.wide-network.org](http://www.wide-network.org)). That is, there is a basis in most communities already for intuitive economic activity.

### **Is there a Role for Higher Education?**

Sub-Saharan Africa has one of the most challenging economic environments in the world. What with the legacy of colonialism, lack of investment, a need for infrastructural and public sector enhancement, export obstacles and recurrent financial instability, the struggle to encourage economic

development across the region has been ongoing and difficult. Nevertheless, economic activity continues across the continent at an informal, social and micro level on a daily basis and for many countries it sustains the livelihoods of millions (Moss, 2007: 235-238). The fragile nature of African local economies is systemic and could benefit substantially from, as previously suggested, investment in the guise of technical support, capacity building and community level coordination.

Investment can come in a number of ways, not least by utilising the expertise of the formal education sectors and their resources. The training and resources that local institutions can bring to the immediate environment can have an integrating impact with growth potential. Thirwall lists the main ways in which educational institutions can improve economic performance in developing contexts:

“Education improves the quality of labour, and also the quality of physical capital [assets] through the application of knowledge. Education has spillover effects (externalities) on other sections of society which offset diminishing returns to physical capital. Education is one of the most important inputs into R&D [research and development] and for attracting FDI [foreign direct investment]” (Thirwall, 2011: 237).

Educational institutions are usually at the centre of every community, with universities offering additional weight to this by having departments which often specialise in regional and economic development in some guise or another. As far back as the 1980s, there was evidence to show that investment in education with a connection to the development process has disproportionately positive outcomes in comparison with other types of strategic economic investment. Matched with increasing evidence of the organic impact of micro-development initiatives, this combination provides exciting and innovative possibilities.

Furthermore, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), limited as they are, can be readily enhanced in regions such as sub-Saharan Africa by capacity building and linkage through the higher education sector, their international partners and social enterprise actors. Even a cursory look at the MDGs within this context shows the impact that MSEs can have in local environments on poverty alleviation, education provision, gender equality, healthcare, the environment, and local and global partnership - actions encompassing all of the MDGs. Building micro-development into the outworkings of the MDGs and enhancing the operations of micro-development initiatives to include the MDGs may also go some way to addressing key concerns from Africa regarding the reasons for limited success to date in implementing the goals (Moss, 2007: 135-6). Further to this, evidence of a disconnection between

the MDGs' strategy and trickle-down investment, corroborate the argument that macro-systems alone have not worked in the poorest contexts, nor arguably can they work. The problem is summarised forcefully by Development Studies lecturer at the University of Zambia, Chrispin Matenga:

“MDGs can indeed be achieved, but not through the current approach that does not address the inequalities that exist within and between nations of the world. The neoliberal macroeconomic framework in which the MDGs are embedded is essentially a market doctrine in which profit is the overriding objective. These weaker developing countries that cannot compete in the global village can only benefit through minimalist social welfare programmes packaged in the form of MDGs number one to seven. This cannot spur economic growth in the developing world and reduce poverty in the mass of its people” (2011: 79).

The Association of African Universities (AAU) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) have also recognised the importance of constructing linkages around micro-development and community development, having backed and invested in provision across the sub-continent. This has even gone as far as foundational and innovation investment, training and educational infrastructure support, and building schools with the speculation that these actions will create a dynamic for economic activity from educational institutions outwards into local communities (Lundsgaarde, 2012: 155-58). Coupled with the possibility of inter-university actions, the exchange of knowledge, technical expertise and additional resources, this can provide added impetus for economic stimuli. Furthermore, with academic involvement there is a commitment level that often does not come with macro-economic actors, transnational corporations (TNCs) and intergovernmental departments. The activation of university departments to assist or participate in micro-development initiatives and social economy projects can create what the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) calls 'a force multiplier', meaning that they 'allow individual institutions to combine their particular strengths into a cohesive and more complete developmental strategy' (2011: 1).

Universities will often employ development practitioners in the field or from areas in need of a range of investment tools. Every major urban area and many rural areas will have a university or outreach facility. The triangulation of human resources and assets across institutional, community and NGOs actors remains arguably one of the most under-tapped development catalysts in vulnerable regions in sub-Saharan Africa. Both North-South and South-South partnerships at this level can affect capacity building within local economies that macro-economic drivers cannot access

naturally. It also has the potential of bringing to the economy good practice in management and governance that often elude state agencies. The Africa Unit of the ACU listed the benefits of this consolidation of interests to include: shared ownership, trust and transparency, and mutual understanding and sustainability - all principles that are pertinent to the effective functioning of micro-development initiatives (Africa Unit, 2010).

The beneficiaries of such partnerships include, principally, the recipient communities and social economy, the academics and students at the universities involved, and the business environment in general. Students from participating universities gain access to materials, specialists, ongoing support around employability and entrepreneurship within the context of the local economy. The impact of this can be local and national, with students having the opportunity to use their newly acquired skills upon graduation. This type of initiative assists local community and business leaders to engage with the key themes of social and economic development. They can access local, national and indeed international specialists in a range of competencies and can avail of university resources in order to enhance micro-development practices. University faculty members are impacted upon by the availability of resources and a forum for the development of skills in learning and teaching around the fields of micro-economics, development theory and practice, business law, employability and entrepreneurialism. Together, the agencies involved in these types of micro-development initiatives can assist in the building of optimal framework conditions for accelerated development (McCann and Matenga, 2011: 6-8; Luudsgaarde, 2012: 159). To put it another way, universities have the potential to offer a lifeline to local community development strategies.

## Conclusion

Micro-development in its various guises provides an alternative to formal governmental systems for development. Local level economic activity is diverse and ubiquitous to geographic contexts, requiring more innovative mechanisms to enhance the developmental potential. Those involved in small and localised business initiatives have a tendency to operate outside the formal economy and subsequently need smarter, more flexible means of support. This can be bespoke or sectoral, targeted at individual small enterprise initiatives or cooperatives (for example women's groups or NGO-based social economy projects), but essentially risk factors need to be highlighted and risk minimised to ensure that social security is not compromised by enterprise activity. Further to this, with micro-economic initiatives, welfare must be seen to be implicit to the architecture of the model of economic development and by definition they should work to alleviate poverty.

Universities have a potential in micro-development support because of their proximity to communities that are attracted to this model

of development and because of the resources, human and actual that can be tapped into to stimulate local economic activity. They can be a hub for micro-economic activity and provide barriers to the often exploitative mechanisms of macro-economic development. Overall, evidence is growing of the possibilities of this 'bottom-up' approach to development. A range of micro-development initiatives exist, but more investment is needed and more research required into the scope and depth of influence these initiatives can have on actual poverty alleviation vis-à-vis the rebalancing of developing economies.

**Note:** This article was informed by an ongoing dialogue between colleagues at the University of Zambia and St Mary's College, Queen's University Belfast. Particular acknowledgement goes to Chrispin R. Matenga, Francis Chigunta, Peter Stevenson, and Lee Habasonda.

## References

- Africa Unit (2010) *Good Practices in Educational Partnerships Guide: UKAfrica Higher and Further Education Partnerships*, London: The Africa Unit.
- Armendáriz de Aghion, Beatriz and Morduch, Jonathan (2005) *The Economics of Microfinance*, Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Banerjee, Abhijit and Duflo, Ester (2011) *Poor Economics*, New York: Public Affairs.
- Banerjee, Abhijit and Duflo, Ester (2012) 'Focus on the concrete Steps we can Take Now', *The Observer*, 18 November.
- Collier, Paul (2007) *The Bottom Billion*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Glennie, Jonathan (2008) *The Trouble with Aid*, London: Zed.
- Hayami, Yujiro and Godo, Yoshihisa (2005) *Development Economics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- International Labour Organisation (2012a), 'Local Economic Development (LED)', online brief, available: <http://www.ilo.org/empent/areas/local-economic-development-led/lang-en/index.htm> (accessed 23 January 2013).
- International Labour Organisation (2012b), 'Promoting Micro and Small Enterprises through Improved Entrepreneurs' Access to Finance and Green Business Services (PROMISE IMPACTS)', online brief, available: [http://www.ilo.org/jakarta/whatwedo/projects/WCMS\\_186794/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/jakarta/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_186794/lang-en/index.htm) (accessed 23 January 2013)
- International Labour Organisation (2012c) 'Social responsible enterprise-level practices', online statement, available: <http://www.ilo.org/empent/areas/social-responsible-enterprise-level-practices/lang-en/index.htm> (accessed 23 January 2013)
- Jain, L, Krishnamurty, B and Tripathi, P (1985) *Grass without Roots*, New Dehli: Sage Publications.
- Karlan, Dean and Appel, Jacob (2011) *More than Good Intentions: How a New Economics is Helping to Solve Global Poverty*, New York: Dutton Books.
- Kingsbury, Damian, McKay, John, Hunt, Janet, McGillivray, Mark and Clarke, Matthew (2008) *International Development: Issues and Challenges*, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Lundsgaarde, Erik (ed.) (2012) *Africa Toward 2030: Challenges for Development Policy*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Madeley, John (2005) *Hungry for Trade*, London and New York: Zed Books.

Maharajh, Rasigan, Sall, Alioune and Karuri-Sebina Geci (2012) 'Systemic Technological Innovation in Africa', in Erik Lundsgaarde (ed.) *Africa Toward 2030: Challenges for Development Policy*, Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, pp.138-167.

Matenga, Chrispin (2011) 'Millennium Development Goals and Sub-Saharan Africa: A Force for Economic Change?' in Gerard McCann and Chrispin Matenga (eds.) *Issues in Economic Development in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Lusaka, Zambia: University of Zambia.

McCann, Gerard and Matenga, Chrispin (eds.) (2011) *Issues in Economic Development in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Lusaka, Zambia: University of Zambia

Medep (2010) 'Impact Assessment of Micro-Enterprise Development Programme', Nepal, AusAid.

Medep (2013) 'Objectives', available: <http://www.medep.org.np>, (accessed 23 January 2013).

Micro-development Partners, 'Values', available: <http://www.microdevpartners.org/about-us/#more-18> (accessed 23 January 2013).

Moss, Todd (2007) *African Development: Making Sense of the Issues and Actors*, Boulder: Rienner.

Moyo, Dambisa (2010) *Dead Aid: Why Aid is not Working and How there is a Better Way for Africa*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Muñoz Cabrera, P (2012) 'Economic Alternatives for Gender and Social Justice: Voices and Visions from Latin America', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 14, Spring 2012, pp.64-84.

O'Hearn, Denis (2009) 'Is Trade an Agent of Development?' in Gerard McCann and Stephen McCloskey (eds.), *From the Local to the Global: Key issues in development studies*, London and New York: Pluto Press.

Sen, Amartya (1999) *Development as Freedom*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Stiglitz, Joseph (2002) *Globalization and its Discontents*, London: Penguin.

The Association of Commonwealth Universities (2011) *Building University Partnership for Sustainable Development*, London: ACU Policy and Research Unit.

Thirlwall, A P (2011) *Economics of Development*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

**SECTION TWO:**  
**DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND**  
**SUSTAINABILITY**

## A PERSPECTIVE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Deirdre Hogan and Roland Tormey

### Introduction

As the concept of education for sustainable development (ESD) gained momentum and exposure during the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014, DESD), its relationship with and similarities to development education (DE) were increasingly considered. Is ESD the same as DE? Is DE a subset of ESD? Are DE and ESD competing or complementary approaches to education? What is their relationship with environmental education (EE)?

DE and EE emerged from different traditions and contexts but their aims and objectives occasionally overlapped; the ESD concept drew significantly from the prior work of both. All three forms of education have much in common. They all seek to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable the learner to critically engage with issues of injustice, inequality and unsustainability and to take positive action for change. They share a vision of education that moves away from conventional didactic teaching methods and towards more active, participatory and interdisciplinary approaches, and they promote learning that results in positive action for social and personal change.

In spite of the similarities, the nature of the relationship between DE and ESD in particular remains unclear and at times is a source of confusion and apprehension for advocates and practitioners in the field. This article aims to provide clarity on the relationship between the two concepts. It begins by examining development education and environmental education, and exploring the contributions of each to the emergence of ESD. It identifies some of the tensions and uncertainty that exist between DE and ESD, while emphasising the strong relationships between their contents, methodologies and ideologies. The article concludes by urging that the tensions be addressed through open dialogue and collaboration while realising the immense potential of combining efforts in order to meaningfully address the complex and interrelated issues addressed by both fields. The need for education for positive change is too critical to be lost in a battle of words.

### The Contested Ownership of ESD

When the UN declared that 2005–2014 would be the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, responsibility for developing a strategy for

the Decade in the European region was assigned to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The UNECE drew together representatives from governments, academia and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from North America, Europe, Russia, Turkey, Israel and the Central Asian former Soviet Republics to accomplish this task. When this group came together for their second meeting in Rome in July 2004 it was immediately evident that the sub-committee responsible for drafting the text and its subsequent revisions had done an excellent job, as most areas of contention had been resolved. It appeared that there would be few difficulties in putting the final draft of the strategy to bed.

However, one problem area remained. The paragraph that briefly sketched the history of the ESD concept made reference to the place of environmental education as one of the building blocks of ESD, but made no reference to development education. It seemed a small matter when a number of delegates suggested that this omission be corrected. Yet it became the major bone of contention in the Rome discussions.

It quickly became apparent that, while some of those from Northern and Western countries were familiar with DE and tended to view sustainable development as the child of two conceptual parents (development and environmental sustainability), many of those from Mediterranean countries or from the East had little familiarity with development education and tended to view sustainable development as an outgrowth from the environmentalist movement. Some felt that recognising other forms of adjectival education alongside environmental education was, somehow, conceding the political capital accrued by the environmentalist movement to 'some group of developmentalists' who had not toiled long and hard alongside them. What seemed at first like a minor amendment became an ideological battle for the soul and political capital of the ESD concept.

In the end a compromise was found and the final text made reference to both environmental education and 'development and other targeted forms of education'. The shortened form of environmental education (EE) was capitalised to give it the status of a proper noun, while development education was clearly de-emphasised. Paragraph 13 of the strategy, adopted at a UNECE meeting of ministers in Vilnius on 18 March 2005 states:

"It [ESD] broadens the concept of environmental education (EE), which has increasingly addressed a wide range of development subjects. ESD also encompasses various elements of development and other targeted forms of education".

Yet, the conflict becomes more important than the compromise when two separate groups feel ownership of the concept of ESD to the point where they are in contention. In a different context, O'Sullivan (2005) acknowledges that

when different educational positions become subsumed under a common title there can be a process of pastiche-making, a process of cutting, pasting and splicing which glosses over different positions and creates the semblance of unanimity. However, he believes it is better to explore the diverse positions as such, because it is precisely the interplay between positions that generates critical thinking about them (2005: 320).

Despite development education and environmental education operating mostly within their own distinct sectors, they did not develop entirely without influences from the other. There were a few who have addressed environmental issues in their DE work as well as some who have addressed development issues in their EE work. Yet it was more often the case that DE work was delivered with little reference to environmental sustainability, and that EE practitioners often neglected global development and inequalities. As the concept of sustainable development evolved, however, it became clear that these types of concepts cannot be easily separated. Therefore, we need to move from a situation where DE and EE are seen as separate but occasionally overlapping to a situation where they are seen as integrally intertwined. This is the conceptual shift that we seek to explore here.

### **Development Education and Environmental Issues**

The concept of DE emerged in the 1970s from the work of international aid agencies and development NGOs who recognised the need to educate the developed world about issues of poverty and injustice in the Third World (Regan, 2006: 108). The Joint UN Information Committee (JUNIC) working group on DE, led by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), created international partnerships with NGOs and built links with public interest groups and development action networks. National committees on development education also began to emerge in several countries. UNICEF established a clearinghouse through which national committees, NGOs and field officers were kept informed of new ideas, publications and productions that would support the integration of DE into formal, non-formal and informal education (UNICEF, 1986).

Ireland was receptive to the DE message. There already existed a strong connection to developing countries through Irish missionary organisations and the Catholic Church strongly supported their initiatives. Trócaire was established in 1973 by Irish Catholic bishops with a dual mandate to support development projects overseas and to inform the Irish public about the root causes of global poverty and injustice. It was a forerunner to DE in Ireland, and from the early stages committed to spending 20 percent of its income on education of development issues (Kirby, 1994: 68). In the mid-1970s the Development Education Commission (DEC) was set up within the Confederation of Non-Governmental Organisations for Overseas Development (CONGOOD) to promote DE within the non-

formal education sector. The DEC engaged in information sharing, political lobbying on development issues, public education campaigns and the joint production of development literature (Dóchas, 2005: 12). The case for DE in Ireland was strengthened further in 1978 when the Department of Foreign Affairs introduced a DE grants scheme.

While DE traditionally focused on poverty and related issues, a number of authors and practitioners recognised the importance of the environmental link to human security. In an Irish context, for example, the *75:25 Ireland in an Unequal World* resource produced by CONGOOD in 1984 identified the environment as a key development education theme. In the UK, the Development Compass Rose, which originated in the work of the Birmingham Development Education Centre (DEC) gave environmental concerns a central role. The development studies literature, from which DE drew some of its inspiration and content material, also included a growing focus on environmental issues. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), for example, placed a growing emphasis on the relationship between the environment and development, as was evident in a number of Human Development Reports (UNDP, 1992; 1998; 2003; 2006; 2007) that explicitly addressed the environment as a key theme. In 2000, the United Nations included environmental sustainability as one of the eight Millennium Development Goals and, in 2006, the White Paper on Irish Aid referred to the importance of environmental protection in supporting livelihoods of people in the developing world (Irish Aid, 2006b: 63).

### **Environmental Education and Development Issues**

The emergence of environmental education can be traced back to the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm, Sweden. The conference recommended the establishment of the International Environmental Education Programme (IEEP) to raise awareness of environmental problems and to build EE capacity across member states (United Nations Environment Programme, 1972). The Belgrade Charter, produced in 1975 at the International Workshop on Environmental Education in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, provided a Global Framework for Environmental Education, stating that EE programmes should be interdisciplinary, involve active participation, have a global perspective, and consider both current and future situations. It went on to suggest that ‘environmental education should consider the environment in its totality - (including) natural and man-made, ecological, political, economic, technological, social, legislative, cultural and aesthetic aspects’ (UNEP, 1975). In subsequent years principles, guidelines and actions for the implementation of EE were developed through the Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education, held in Tbilisi in 1977, and the International Congress in Moscow in 1987.

While EE focused primarily on issues such as acid rain, pollution and depletion of natural resources, it broadened its remit to address development issues. International conferences identified the root causes of many environmental problems in social, economic and cultural terms (UNESCO, 1987: 5). Speakers from developing countries at Stockholm in 1972 emphasised that the task of resolving environmental instability was second to providing more immediate needs such as food, shelter and healthcare:

“...for two-thirds of the world’s population the human environment was dominated by poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy and misery...until the gap between the poor and the rich countries was substantially narrowed, little if any progress could be made in improving the human environment” (UNEP, 1972).

The relationship between the environment and poverty was further noted in the final report of the Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education in Tbilisi in 1977:

“...environmental problems are not just those of the detrimental or irrational use of natural resources and pollution. They include problems of underdevelopment, such as inadequate housing and shelter, bad sanitary conditions, malnutrition, defective management and production practices and, more generally all problems which stem from poverty” (UNESCO, 1977: 11).

### **Integrating Development and Environmental Issues through ESD**

A major conceptual breakthrough came with the work of the World Commission on Environment and Development, otherwise known as the Brundtland Commission, which was established by the UN to re-examine global environmental and development problems and to suggest practical and realistic proposals to address them. The resulting Brundtland Report promoted the concept of sustainable development, defining it as ‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ (Brundtland, 1987). It identified three components to sustainable development: economic growth, environmental protection and social equity, and suggested that all three could be achieved by gradually changing the ways in which we develop and use technologies (Environmental Literacy Council, 2006).

The work of the Brundtland Commission was followed up at the Rio Summit in 1992, which produced Agenda 21, a blueprint for sustainable development into the 21st century. Chapter 36 titled ‘Promoting Education, Public Awareness, and Training’, focused on the role of ESD

in providing access to quality basic education for all, building public awareness of sustainable development issues, reorienting existing education to incorporate sustainable development concerns and ensuring that training programmes for all job sectors reflect sustainable development practice. Ten years later the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg recommended that the United Nations General Assembly adopt a Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, from 2005–2014, with UNESCO as the lead agency.

### **The Apparent Tensions between DE and ESD**

The concept of ESD essentially combines development and environmental educations by adding social and economic perspectives to environmental education and environmental concerns to development education. Perhaps more importantly it brings environment and development educators closer together under a new, all-inclusive school of thought. However, despite occasional overlapping between EE and DE in the past and the necessary merging of the two fields of operation that ESD provides, tensions remain between DE and ESD.

Advocates of ESD suggest that environment and development organisations share common concerns with regard to the sustainability of the planet and its people and should therefore make strong partners. But, as the discussions on the UNECE Strategy (and the text adopted in the strategy itself) make clear, there are those within the ESD movement who see it primarily as an outgrowth, and a refocusing, of EE. One consequence of this is that some who call themselves practitioners of ESD still focus largely on environmental themes of climate change, pollution and resource use.

This apparent centrality of EE concerns to some ESD practice has meant that ESD has been met with caution by some development educators, who have argued that ‘ESD is not a partnership of equals, with the more public-friendly environment message eclipsing or minimising the importance of human development’ (McCloskey, 2003: 192). It is widely recognised that ESD is more than simply the sum of DE and EE (Bourn, 2003: 12; Fien, 2003: 4; Martin, 2003: 11) and so there may be a concern that focusing all eyes on ESD can detract from their respective agendas for change. There may be a feeling among DE practitioners that they don’t want to lose their title of development education practitioners and that too many years and too much effort were invested in creating a profile for DE to sign their work over to ESD. The uncertainty is strengthened when considering how the different adjectival educations have often been isolated from each other in the past, pursuing separate agendas and seldom forming strategic alliances (Regan and Sinclair, 1999: 29).

These divisions are given greater meaning as each draws from a different constituency, coordinated by a different group, relating to a different

government department and seeking funding from different sources. In Ireland, environmental education is led by agencies like An Taisce and ECO-UNESCO and supported by organisations such as Comhar and Ecological Environmental Non-Government Organisations Network (EENGO); development education is led by agencies like Trócaire and Amnesty International and coordinated by Dóchas; and education for sustainable development is currently coordinated by a National Steering Committee on ESD comprising representatives from a variety of departments and agencies. At governmental level, EE is housed in the Department of Environment and Local Government, DE is located in the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the National Strategy on ESD is the preserve of the Department of Education and Science.

While it would be a mistake to overstate the separateness of these contexts (for example Irish Aid has long funded environmental education projects which had a development component), they do at the same time constitute different milieus within which EE and DE have historically conceptualised themselves, within different sets of relationships and different ‘powerbases’.

### **Grounds for Collaboration between DE and ESD**

Given the apparent centrality of EE concerns to ESD, and given the parallel and marginally overlapping past agendas of EE and DE, it is not surprising that development educators might be slow to engage with the ESD agenda. Notwithstanding this fact, however, the conceptual linkages between DE and ESD are striking. These similarities can be readily seen in a comparison of nationally and internationally accepted definitions of and strategies for DE and ESD. We will now explore a number of these linkages using the Irish Aid definition of DE, and UNECE and UNESCO documents on ESD, as our reference points.

Both DE and ESD refer to the complexity of development issues. Irish Aid describes DE as a process of ‘increasing awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world in which we live’ (Irish Aid, 2006a: 9). UNESCO describes ESD as a process of helping people to ‘better understand the world in which they live and address the complexity and interconnectedness of problems such as poverty, wasteful consumption, environmental degradation, urban decay, population growth, health, conflict and the violation of human rights that threaten our future’ (UNESCO, 2003).

The primary emphasis of DE is global poverty and related issues of underdevelopment, human rights, food and water security, health, trade, peace, education and gender. DE promotes an awareness of the causes of poverty and underdevelopment, an understanding of rights and responsibilities, and an appreciation of opportunities to effect change for a more just and equal world (Irish Aid, 2006b: 107). Similarly UNESCO, addressing the goals

of ESD, recognises that ‘poverty eradication is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development’ (UNESCO, 2002: 3). ESD explores the same issues that DE seeks to bring to the fore, including poverty alleviation, citizenship, peace ethics, responsibility in local and global contexts, democracy and governance, justice, security, human rights, health, gender equity, cultural diversity, rural and urban development, economy, production and consumption patterns and corporate responsibility (UNECE, 2005: 4). Martin writes that the new goal of sustainable development means that at last DE and EE practitioners have ‘the same hymn sheet and the divergence of the early years [have] started to coincide’ (Martin, 2003: 11).

While DE recognises the importance of the environment for human security, its practice tends to focus on the social and economic issues that relate to development. ESD on the other hand places the environment on an equal standing with social and economic factors. UNESCO defines ESD as ‘a process of learning how to make decisions that consider the long-term future of the economy, ecology and equity of all communities’ (UNESCO, 2003: 4). As well as the issues listed above, ESD also focuses on areas such as environmental protection, natural resource management and biological and landscape diversity (UNECE, 2005: 4). The importance of environmental concerns in addressing human development needs has been increasingly recognised within development literature, and a UNDP Human Development Report has noted that ‘climate change is a massive threat to human development and in some places it is already undermining the international community’s efforts to reduce extreme poverty’ (2007: v). As such, ESD provides the broadened focus for DE that is becoming increasingly necessary.

### **Active and Participatory Learning Approaches of DE and ESD**

As with other education sectors, DE and ESD are both located on the periphery of formal education curricula, and seek to integrate a global perspective into existing disciplines and programmes. Both advocate the use of a holistic and interdisciplinary approach. UNECE states that ESD should use a range of participatory, process- and solution-oriented educational methods tailored to the learner (UNECE, 2005: 7). Similarly, Freirean liberation theory, which underpins DE, promotes problem-based learning, dialogue and participation within a co-operative learning environment where the teacher engages in learning with the student (Freire, 1970).

The complexity of development issues necessitates that learners have an opportunity to develop skills such as information processing, critical thinking, systemic thinking and personal reflection. These skills support engagement with the depth of information available, as well as the contradicting arguments and the absence of one simple solution. UNECE (in its strategy for ESD) describes this methodology as using ‘systemic, critical and creative thinking

and reflection in both local and global contexts' (UNECE, 2005: 4). Irish Aid describes it as 'seeking to engage people in analysis, reflection and action for local and global citizenship and participation' (Irish Aid, 2006a: 9).

Change begins with the learner. This may mean reflection on personal behaviour and practices and acting accordingly. Actions consistent with sustainable development include reducing energy consumption in the home, minimising one's ecological footprint, recognising and promoting cultural diversity, critiquing Ireland's Overseas Development Aid programme, taking action in developing countries through NGOs or volunteering organisations, becoming ethically aware consumers and taking an interest in media representation of local and global issues.

The conceptual relationship between ESD and DE clearly addresses the need for development and environmental issues to be addressed in an integrated way, and it is essential that we find ways of moving beyond the tensions which have characterised relations between practitioners of DE and ESD. Increased interaction between departments of education, foreign affairs and environment (as well as between the activists and movements they interact with) will be necessary for the development of an Irish National Strategy for ESD, particularly given the traditional separation of environmental and development education discourses. Such a process of bringing together people from different traditions, with different priorities but the same basic goal, is not always easy, but it is essential if we are to build a strong basis for addressing joint concerns. It is in the best interest of both DE and ESD that development educators do not leave the field of play to those who prioritise environmental concerns, but instead actively engage in the process of forging a unifying and comprehensive ESD.

## Conclusion

The concepts of development education and environmental education emerged in the 1970s to focus on issues associated with underdevelopment and environmental degradation respectively. As time progressed it became apparent that these individual agendas were interrelated; global poverty could not be considered in isolation of the environment and vice versa. The Brundtland Report reconciled the interests of both under the umbrella of sustainable development, and Agenda 21 put forward the concept of education for sustainable development. However, tension remains between DE and ESD, partly due to disparities in tradition, relationships, and how and where each is organised. Notwithstanding these differences, DE and ESD are very similar in terms of content, methodology, ideology and commitment to action for positive change. In light of this it is essential that practitioners of DE and ESD work together to share educational expertise, to combine forces and to strategically plan for a future that places DE and ESD at the centre of formal, non-formal and informal education.

## References

- Bourn, D (2003) 'Towards a Theory of Development Education', *Development Education Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 3-4.
- Brundtland, G (ed.) (1987) *Our Common Future: The World Commission on Environment and Development*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dóchas (2005) 'A History of Dochas, 1974-2004: The First Thirty Years', Dublin: Dóchas.
- Environmental Literacy Council (2006), available: <http://www.enviroliteracy.org/>, (accessed 16 February 2015).
- Fien, J (2003) 'Towards the UN decade: Looking Backwards, Looking Forwards', *Development Education Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp.3-6.
- Freire, P (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Irish Aid (2006a) 'Irish Aid and Development Education: describing...understanding ...challenging', Dublin: Irish Aid.
- Irish Aid (2006b) *White Paper on Irish Aid*, Dublin: Irish Aid.
- Kirby, B (ed.) (1994) *Education for Change – Grassroots Development Education in Europe*, NGDO-EC Liaison Committee, London: DEA.
- Martin, P (2003) 'From Here to Eternity', *Development Education Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp. 10-12.
- McCloskey, S (2003) 'Education as an agent of social change' in G McCann & S McCloskey (eds.) *From the Local to the Global: Key Issues in Development Studies*, London: Pluto Press.
- O'Sullivan, D (2005) *Cultural Politics and Irish Education since the 1950s*, Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.
- Regan, C (ed.) (2006) *80:20 Development in an Unequal World*, 5th Edition, Bray: 80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World.
- Regan, C & Sinclair, S (1999) 'Essential Learning for Everyone: Raising the Debate about Civil Society, World Citizenship and the Role of Education', Birmingham: The Development Education Commission.

UNDP (2007) *Human Development Report 2007/2008 Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, Macmillan.

UNECE (2005) 'Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development', available: <http://www.unece.org/env/esd>, (accessed 16 February 2015).

UNEP (1972) 'Stockholm 1972: A Brief Summary of the Debate', available: <http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=97>, (accessed 16 February 2015).

UNEP (1975) 'The Belgrade Charter', [http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=33037&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPI...](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=33037&URL_DO=DO_TOPI...)

UNESCO (1977) 'Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education Final Report', available: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0003/000327/032763eo.pdf>, (accessed 16 February 2015).

UNESCO (1987) 'The International Strategy for Action in the Field of Environmental Education', available: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0008/000805/080583eo.pdf>, (accessed 16 February 2015).

UNESCO (2002) 'Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development', Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO (2003) 'Draft Framework for a Draft Implementation Scheme for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development', Paris: UNESCO.

UNICEF (1986) 'Development Education in UNICEF', available: <http://www.cf-hst.net/UNICEF-TEMP/mon/CF-HST-MON-1986-001-development-education-mono-I.pdf>, (accessed 16 February 2015).

## DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: ARE THEY STRIKING A FAUSTIAN BARGAIN?

David Selby and Fumiyo Kagawa

Faustus is writ large in European mythology. A sixteenth century German astronomer, he is reputed to have sold his soul to the devil for unlimited power. In modern English parlance, to 'strike a Faustian bargain' is to be willing to sacrifice anything for knowledge or power or influence, closing one's eyes to the consequences. This article enters the landscape of development education and education for sustainable development and finds either a falling in with the neo-liberal marketplace agenda or a reluctance to directly, overtly and critically engage with that agenda. We wonder why. Are the fields in danger of striking a Faustian bargain so as to achieve some purchase and influence over educational directions, a bargain that brings short-term gains at the expense of transformative goals? We offer some suggestions for having influence but sidestepping such a bargain.

### Falling in or Falling Out with Growth and Globalisation?

The recent global financial meltdown has occasioned yet another wave of frenzied action to revitalise the global economic growth machine. Governments, banks, corporations, as well as the multilateral and bilateral banking and development agencies related to the United Nations system, are now canvassing and enacting all kinds of initiatives intended to stimulate (or at least avoid hampering) further and faster growth. These include swingeing reductions in public expenditure and services, reinvigorated drives towards privatisation, decentralisation of control away from government, and otherwise shrinking governmental latitude to intervene and regulate so as to shield the vulnerable from oftentimes deleterious market forces.

All of this is happening in the name of the global marketplace, of ensuring virility in an era of global competitiveness predicated on unending growth. Affluent societies and peoples, in particular, have become so transfixed by the idea of economic growth that it has taken on the proportions of delusional realism. Capitalist realism, argues Mark Fisher (2009:2), has become such an ideological malaise that there is a 'widespread sense that not only is capitalism the only viable political and economic system, but that it is now impossible even to *imagine* a coherent alternative to it' (*italics in original*). As Clive Hamilton (2010:32) sees it, we have become immured in 'growth fetishism'. He writes:

“In affluent societies...religious value seems now to be invested in the most profane object, growth of the economy, which at the individual level takes the form of the accumulation of material goods. Our political leaders and commentators believe that it has magical powers that provide the answer to every problem. Growth alone will save the poor. If inequality causes concern, a rising tide lifts all boats. Growth will solve unemployment. If we want better schools and more hospitals then economic growth will provide. And if the environment is in decline then higher growth will generate the means to fix it. Whatever the social problem, the answer is always more growth” (2010:33).

The reference to growth as an article of quasi-religious faith is echoed by Bob Lloyd (2009:516) who sees close parallels between the ‘God delusion’ as interrogated by Richard Dawkins (2006) and what he calls the ‘growth delusion’, ‘the irrational insistence on endless growth as a non negotiable axiom, by a large proportion of the world’s population’. Those with the temerity to suggest that the king of growth is in the altogether are ‘denigrated as aberrant spoilsports’ (Lloyd, 2009: 517) and characterised as ‘opponents of progress’ wishing us back to a cave dwelling existence (Hamilton, 2010: 34). Viable alternatives are not there to countenance; they are banished from the mainstream landscape.

Economic growth goes hand in glove with economic globalisation; what Carlos Torres (2009: 14) calls ‘globalization from above’. This involves the ongoing neo-liberal systemisation of the world as marketplace through the opening of national economic borders, the creation of huge regional markets, the acceleration and intensification of financial exchange especially through electronic communication, the burgeoning role of the corporate sector, and the diminution of the power and sway of the nation state by reducing its capacity to stem the global tide of market deregulation and by weakening national authority in determining policy priorities and stripping national legislation of its force (Hall, 2002: 36; Rizvi, 2004; Torres, 2009: 14; Wells et al., 1998).

This hegemonic form of globalisation is resisted by ‘globalization from below’ (Torres, 2009: 15) - the myriad more or less interconnected expressions globally of social and environmental justice activism and indigenous cultural resistance (Hawken, 2007; Selby and Kagawa, 2011). It is also paralleled by the globalisation of human rights, a connection often being made between the full exercise of pluralistic democracy and optimal free play of markets. Parallels and synergies between economic globalisation and the global application of human rights have been noted, in that both have the effect of eroding the boundaries of the nation state, as has the ‘smokescreen’ nature of much which passes for rights reform in an increasingly neo-liberal

environment (Torres, 2009: 17, 18, 21). In reality, the embrace of humanistic values is largely tokenistic within neo-liberal discourse (Chossudovsky, 1997; Stromquist, 2002). 'The trouble,' writes Hossey, 'is, increasingly, the only goals that matter are those defined by the market. Concerns over the health of the global ecosystem, justice, traditions, sacred beliefs, shared community, care and concern for fellow beings, are all left by the wayside' (2006: 120).

Within such a climate, there is the constant danger that those committed to 'globalisation from below' can find themselves co-opted, seduced or swallowed up by the growth and globalisation agendas. Wanting to effect change, they feel themselves facing a dilemma of either trimming their agenda so as to have some say, sway and influence of a reformist nature within the prevailing climate or of adhering to a transformative, status quo critical, standpoint which may well resign them to a position of peripheral, maverick influence. Do they opt for tampering with, and so, perhaps, bolstering the system, or stand by turning it around? A case in point is that of climate change advocates seeking purchase and influence in the corridors of power and so making the most persuasive case they can for green energy primarily based on its potential to make a significant contribution to continuous economic growth. They have chosen to do this when, all around them, lies abundant evidence that economic growth and consumerism are at the root of runaway climate change that is already damaging the lives of 325 million people per year (Hamilton, 2010: 41; Global Humanitarian Forum, 2009: 1). Advocacy of green energy is laudable but in making their case as persuasively as possible to the powers-that-be they accede to making protection of the climate secondary to growth. In so doing a kind of Faustian bargain is struck; a collusion with the prevailing neo-liberal worldview in return for some, likely ephemeral, purchase on policy. A place at the table now, whatever the dystopian future prospects afforded by the growth imperative. For probably similar reasons, leading environmental advocates have chosen to relinquish their public embrace of the intrinsic value of nature by adopting an instrumental growth-speak lexicon in which nature is described as 'natural capital', 'ecosystem services' and 'natural resources' (Selby and Kagawa, 2011).

In this article we want to enquire of the interrelated and overlapping fields of development education and education for sustainable development whether they are similarly in process or danger of striking a Faustian bargain. Each field draws significant inspiration from a radical, status quo critical, value system, espousing transformative intentions with respect to the human condition and the human/nature relationship. As such, they can be considered educational expressions of 'globalization from below'. But, are there signs within each field of a compromising of values and trimming of original intentions and visions happening in the light of the global marketplace? And, if so, is that happening by commission, by oversight borne of sleeping immersion in current orthodoxies, or by studied omission?

## Development Education across Europe: What is Said; What is Not Being Said

Development education in Europe is a broad field embracing overlapping initiatives under various headings: development education and awareness raising (DEAR), global education, global development education, global learning, education for sustainable development, to name but a few. The *European Consensus on Development* states that ‘Development Education and Awareness Raising contribute to the eradication of poverty and to the promotion of sustainable development through public awareness raising and education approaches and activities that are based on values of human rights, social responsibility, gender equality and a sense of belonging to one world’ (*European Consensus on Development: The Contribution of Development Education and Awareness Raising*, 2007: 5).

Agnes Rajacic, et al.’s (2010) comprehensive review of the field analyses definitions, interpretations and concepts of development education and awareness raising among key actors and in key policy documents, identifying some common aspirations. First, DEAR aims to offer ‘differentiated knowledge and critical **understanding** of global interdependence, global and local development and environmental challenges, power relations, and issues of identity/diversity’. Second, it seeks to ‘**empower people** to participate in public affairs’, by enhancing ‘citizen’s active involvement and engagement for social change’ within their local environment and by promoting ‘active citizenship and co-responsibility at the global level of world society’. Third, DEAR’s vision is underpinned by ‘**values** of justice, equality, inclusion, human rights, solidarity, and respect for others and for the environment’. Fourth, it aspires to ‘learner-centred, participatory and facilitative, dialogue oriented and experiential’ pedagogies that help learners ‘learn how to learn’. Fifth, it seeks to effect ‘informed citizen engagement and advocacy for more just and sustainable policies, political/economic structures and individual practices’. Sixth, acknowledging the limitations of current Eurocentric perspectives in the field, it suggests integrating Southern perspectives more rigorously (2010: 11-12, bold in original). Overall, the study points to an emerging tendency to move away from uncritical acceptance and promotion of an official development co-operation agenda to more critical engagement with development-related issues.

Such a transformative reorientation is welcome. However, what is largely missing from current DEAR discourse is explicit attention to issues of economic growth, neo-liberal globalisation and consumerism which, according to many commentators, are deeply and devastatingly culpable for fomenting inequality and social injustice and the destruction of the ecosphere and ethnosphere (Chossudovsky, 1997; Hall, 2002; McGregor, 2003). A keyword search of three recent studies on development education in Europe (CONCORD/DEEEP, 2009; Krause, 2010; Rajacic, et al., 2010)

reveals that economic growth is barely mentioned, let alone problematised. Then, while globalisation appears throughout the three studies, usually associated with the concept of ‘interdependence’, it seems to be taken as a given, an essentially unexceptional, non-complicit canvas against which social justice and environmental issues are treated. There is no single mention in the studies of ‘consumerism’, although ‘consumption’ is identified as a development education theme at project level, for instance, in Bulgaria and Lithuania (fair trade, sustainable consumption), Poland (sustainable consumption), Norway (sustainable production and consumption), and the Czech Republic (ethical/responsible consumption).

Some expressions of development education adopt a heavy ‘global skills’ orientation which, in its formulation and overall tenor, would seem to close down learning opportunities for sustained and forensic scrutiny of the complicity of the global marketplace. *Global Skills*, a manual produced by the Development Education Research Centre at the University of London’s Institute of Education, offers ‘a framework that equips the UK workforce to make sense of the global society, with the appropriate skills to be active participants in the global society and economy of the twenty first century’ (Bourn, 2008: 4). In one passage it summarises the generic skills the learner requires:

“It could be argued that generic skills in the context of globalisation refer firstly to areas such as being prepared to communicate well with a range of people, recognising their cultural and social differences.... Secondly, working within a global economy requires skills to respond to rapidly changing needs, being prepared to take on a variety of tasks and being able to adapt and continually recognise the need for developing new skills and knowledge. Thirdly, in the context of working with others, understanding cultural difference and developing skills to work with people in collaborative environments from a range of backgrounds could be crucial” (Bourn, 2008: 24).

The manual’s skills summary takes in three elements:

- Understanding of what globalisation means, particularly in relation to planned and current employment;
- Ability to understand and engage with global challenges, such as climate change and poverty, in order to become a more informed and engaged citizen;
- Development of skills to understand and respond to a range of cultures and values and to be able to reflect critically upon one’s own values base (Bourn, 2008: 24).

Development education, so rendered, looks by and large accepting of the neo-liberal growth and globalisation model and seems primarily concerned with workforce preparation for technocratic competitive efficacy. Key global issues are explored but against a backdrop of imperturbable and incontrovertible economic globalisation. Social cohesion and multiculturalism – what the manual refers to as ‘the recognition of cultural sensitivity in forms that are appropriate and relevant to up-skilling the UK workforce’ (4) – matter but are conceived of as feeding into muscular economic performance. Where are the skills and capacities for resistance and transgression amidst a ‘globe-speak’ reflective of UK national imperatives?

These findings raise some important questions. First, why does a field with a core commitment to the eradication of global poverty and inequality through education largely shrink from explicitly addressing the relationship between global poverty, social injustice and environmental devastation and what has been described as ‘the powerful wave of neo-liberalism rolling over the planet’ (Jickling and Wals, 2008: 2). Effective treatment of the relationship would seem to be a *sine qua non* of a thoroughgoing social justice change agenda.

Following from this, does the field sufficiently deal with controversial issues that could be construed as indispensable for fostering ‘informed citizen participation’ and helping the learner ‘learn how to learn’? The 2010 CONCORD/DEEEP study on development education in formal curricula in 29 European countries reveals ‘a reluctance to address particular controversial issues that challenge our global society’, pointing out that the theme of global terrorism never appears in curricula ‘despite its constantly high profile and analysis in national media, and in government policies’. It may be included, the study suggests, under the topic of ‘human security’, as, for instance, in Finnish curricula but is never explicitly referenced (2010: 16). The global growth economy and hyper-consumerism may occupy an analogous position. They may lie submerged under themes such as ‘global poverty’, ‘global economy/markets and trade’, and ‘globalization’ while not made explicit. But, why might that be?

Third, how can mal-development be treated unless consumerism is confronted head-on in learning programmes? There is no assurance in the programme descriptions reviewed that consumerism is interrogated. Or that, if it is present but inconspicuous, the treatment moves beyond reformist ‘consumer awareness’ (sustainable, responsible, ethical, green consumerism) to a critical treatment implicating ‘consumption beyond dignified sufficiency’ (McIntosh, 2008: 180) as complicit in global environmental and social breakdown? David Woodward and Andrew Simms point out that ‘Europe’s levels of consumption amount to more than double its own domestic biocapacity, meaning that European lifestyles can only be sustained by depending on the natural resources and environmental services of other

nations' (2006: 3). Why, then, is rampant consumerism given such minimal attention in development education programmes?

Fourth, what are the repercussions of the easy connect being made with the concept of 'education for sustainable development'? The CONCORD/DEEEP (2009: 13-14) study finds that the terminology 'education for sustainable development' is widespread amongst educational systems, teachers and the NGO sector in 12 European countries, and that development educators in 19 of the 29 countries surveyed are using 'sustainable development' as an operative descriptor in learning programmes. But has the field embraced the concept too readily and uncritically? If so, why might that be?

### **Education for Sustainable Development: *Sotto Voce* on the Neo-liberal Agenda**

*Tomorrow Today* (UNESCO, 2010) is a collection of papers published to coincide with the mid-decade report to the UN General Assembly on the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014). As such, it provides something of a 'state of the art' policy and practitioner overview of a field garnering adherence and support from around the world. The UN agency with coordinating responsibility for DESD, UNESCO, has been identified as a key agency promoting the model of neo-liberal globalisation (Torres, 2009: 15). Perhaps this goes some way to explain the virtual absence of any critical exploration of notions of sustainable development and of the dilemmas and tensions that exist between at one and the same time seeking to sustain a growth economy, ecological systems and social systems.

In an opening contribution to *Tomorrow Today*, the Director of UNESCO's Intersectoral Platform on Education for Sustainable Development, Mark Richmond (2010: 19), asserts that ESD 'provides many of the questions and answers about what education should be about and what it should be for in the 21<sup>st</sup> century'. That said, it is interesting that across the contributions to the collection there are no questions directly addressing and unpacking the neo-liberal agenda and its culpability for fomenting many of the issues that are ubiquitously touched upon in the collection, such as inequality, poverty, starvation, biodiversity collapse and climate change. There is, then, space for a serious look at presenting symptoms and consequences but little, it seems, for critical examination of root causes. Across the collection, too, the inevitability of increased economic globalisation and the consequences for environmental and social (and social justice based) sustainability are not called into question. While there are references to the importance of 'sustainable consumption', there is no direct reference to rampant consumerism in the metaphorical North and amongst elites in the metaphorical South and the part it plays in violating the indentured slave, the sweatshop worker, the once-resilient local community, and ecosystems globally. The global arms trade, a lucrative

strand of globalisation (Hall, 2002: 37) is not mentioned. True, there are contributions expounding the positive benefits of green growth (Sangkyoo, 2010: 49) and outlining approaches to building a corporate social ethic in the private sector (Fien and Maclean, 2010: 24) but absent from the collection are descriptions of programmes that embrace a root and branch critique of the global marketplace, its institutional manifestations and its impacts, and that offer alternatives.

This same lacuna was observed by a UK spokesperson at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. At the Summit there was no critical exploration of sustainable development:

“It was as if engaging in this discussion could potentially ruin the ‘whole idea’ and slow down its world-wide implementation. The focus of this international gathering, instead, seems to have been on how to *promote* education for sustainable development, and how to set standards, benchmarks, and control mechanisms to confidently assess progress towards its realization. Rather than discussing and exposing underlying ideologies, values and worldviews, the general consensus at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and the many meetings that were organized in its slipstream, seemed to be that educators have passed the reflective stage, and that they must roll up their sleeves and start implementing! However, it can also be argued that at best they are implementing a chimera – a fanciful illusion – or worse. It could also be argued that many educators have become agents in the trend towards economic globalization” (Jickling and Wals, 2008: 6, italics in original).

How resonant is this with the neo-liberal educational agenda of standards, benchmarks, testing and accountability!

The Bonn Declaration emerging from the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development, March/April 2009, was in similar vein with two thirds of its text given over to a ‘call for action’ listing of concrete initiatives that policy makers and practitioners should undertake. In its (short) preamble, there is reference to the global economic system. ‘The global financial and economic crises’, the text goes (UNESCO, 2009: 1), ‘highlights the risks of unsustainable economic development models and practices based on short-term gains’. This is subsequently followed by the assertion that ESD ‘is critical for the development of new economic thinking’ (2009: 2) but the reader is left wondering in what direction that thinking might tend to go. For John Huckle, UNESCO-driven ESD is tantamount to ‘business as usual’ and supportive of the global treadmill of neo-liberalism. Huckle asserts that the Bonn Declaration, ‘ignores economic and political realities’, ‘locates the challenges facing humanity in values,

rather than the political economy of sustainable societies', 'fails to specify what values, knowledge, skills and competencies might encourage sustainable living, participation in society, and decent work', and 'fails to suggest ways in which current economic thinking should change'. We need, he adds, 'to locate the barriers to sustainability in the structures and processes of global capitalism and recognise the limitations of dominant models of sustainable development and current proposals for new green deals' (2010: 135-136).

There is a fundamental problematic in education for sustainable development arising out of the continued reticence of its agencies and proponents to come clean about whether, for them, development connotes growth. The World Commission on Environment and Development report, *Our Common Future*, gave us the definition of sustainable development that has been rehearsed mantra-like in the past twenty years or so: 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs' (WCED, 1987: 43). The report proceeds to treat economic growth and sustainable development as largely consistent concepts, a view compounded at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Gutiérrez Perez and Pozo Llorente, 2005: 298) yet fails, as do most still reciting the 'Brundtland' formula, to reconcile the problems associated with a paradigm that conceives of a future that is 'axiomatically sustainable and able to grow' while being 'supported indefinitely by a finite Earth' (Lloyd, 2009: 516). 'It will be highly improbable to reconcile the objectives of poverty reduction and environmental sustainability if global growth remains the principal economic strategy', write Woodward and Simms (2006). 'The scale of growth this model demands would generate unsupportable environmental costs; and the costs would fall disproportionately, and counter productively, on the poorest – the very people the growth is meant to benefit'.

A related problematic concerns the melding of globalisation and sustainable development, a union that many sustainability educators appear to see as wholly unexceptional or advocate as desirable (see, for instance, Bourn, 2009). According to Jackson (2003: 325), globalisation is more or less taken without question as 'a viable agenda for a sustainable and just future for all people'. For Jickling and Wals (2008: 5), education for sustainable development is a policy-driven phenomenon, both a subset of and propelled forward by the globalisation imperative. 'We view education for sustainable development', they write, 'as a product and carrier of globalizing forces' (2008: 18). As such it becomes allied with allopoetic (neocolonial, externally driven and/or imposed) forms of development rather than autopoietic (locally framed, self-generating and self-regulating) alternatives (Shiva, 2008: 14).

The field so far offers little by way of antidote to the growth machine by opening learning windows for consideration of ideas for transition to slow growth, no growth and steady state economies (Daly, 1996; Victor, 2008) or

for concretising those ideas through learning-in-community experimentation and practice.

Critical theory prompts us to apply some important insights when we find no-go areas and blind spots, such as the insights proffered by Delyse Springett:

“What is power? Who holds power? How is it used in the sustainability debate? The concept of ‘false consciousness’: the ways in which we may consent to domination and hegemony and accept taken-for-granted ideologies without realizing we are doing so. The exploration of ‘silences’ or ‘gaps’ in the discourse; what is not ‘up for discussion’ may be even more important than what is” (Springett, 2010: 80-81).

### **Sidestepping a Faustian Bargain**

We have reviewed the fields of development education and education for sustainable development. With the first, we are left wondering why neo-liberal growth and globalisation are kept in the shadows when so clearly complicit in deepening poverty and injustice and harming the environment. With the second, we are left pondering on the reluctance to confront growth fetishism in the name of sustainable development and why the field is so seemingly comfortable with the globalisation of a marketplace that so threatens sustainability prospects. With both fields, we ask ourselves why the exploration of alternatives to the growth model fails to receive the curricular exposure the global condition would seem to merit.

Are there traces of a Faustian bargain here? Is the need to achieve purchase within educational systems increasingly wedded to the purposes of the global marketplace encouraging circumspection in identifying with status quo critical agendas? Is there an element of self-censorship amongst academic and non-governmental providers of development and sustainability learning programmes and resources as they gauge what development arms of government offering funding support and funding foundations are likely to countenance? Are alignment with prevailing orthodoxies and avoidance of the potentially risqué becoming consciously adopted strategies in relating to government and the formal sector? We have no answers to any of these questions, only hunches, and can only speculate, just as we encourage colleagues from within their respective contexts, roles and responsibilities to speculate and reflect.

With powerful forces wedded to the global marketplace, how might those committed to pursuing a transformative agenda sidestep the dangers of falling into a Faustian bargain? We close with some suggestions:

*Catalyse the 'Shadow Spaces'*

Institutions have their formal dimensions and structures but also their 'shadow spaces', 'the relational spaces within organisations that cut across the formal organisational structures for learning and adaptation, and which relate to individual and social learning'. These spaces 'allow individuals or sub-groups within organisations to experiment, imitate, communicate, learn and reflect on their actions in ways that can surpass formal processes within policy and organisational settings' (Pelling, et al., 2008: 868). Effectively nurtured, the dynamism of the shadow space can inform the formal dimension. Transformative educators, we suggest, might do well to think more creatively and laterally about strategies for creative use of shadow spaces and for inducing spillover into the formal. These can be built into project design.

*Ask Questions of and Speak Truth to Power*

From the platform, in the workshop, over an informal cup of tea or anywhere else, we can ask questions of power, just as Delyse Springett, cited above, does. Or, as Vanessa Andreotti (2006: 44) does: 'Who is this global citizen? What should be the basis of this project? Whose interests are represented here? Is this an elitist project? Are we empowering the dominant group to remain in power? Are we doing enough to examine the local/global dimensions of our assumptions?' We can tease out and expose incongruities in mainstream thinking (for instance, between embracing, on the one hand, growth-oriented sustainable development and committing to tackling global inequality, on the other). We can follow Woodard and Simms (2006: 5) in asking the king-is-in-the-altogether question of 'why is [economic growth] the single over-riding goal of every government, of every economy, the world over?'

*Capitalise on Trojan Horses within the Walls of Mainstream Thinking*

Notions such as 'balance', presenting diverse perspectives and critical thinking are articles of faith within formal learning systems. The problem has been that the arms of the balancing scales have not extended far enough either side of the fulcrum, the diversity of perspective has been excessively constricted, and the critical thinking not very wide or deep. But in the name of these articles of faith, the transformative educator can legitimately fold into learning resources and processes critical examination of the growth machine and its impact, and of alternatives to growth. In an age of deepening uncertainty, we can argue for a pedagogy of uncertainty that unlocks and fully engages with peripheralised perspectives in the name of securing some future.

*Do Not See Social Entities as Monolithic*

We should regularly remind ourselves that no arm of government offering development education funding, no funding foundation, no educational

system and no learning institution is made up of people uniformly wedded to one worldview. Diversity, difference and dissonance are everywhere! A critical stance towards the growth-oriented global marketplace can resonate in the most unexpected of quarters! Seeking to effect transformative change involves at one level developing and building outwards from a network of the sympathetic within and across institutions and systems. But we should note, too, that across the plethora of funding sources for development education and education for sustainable development, there are grant givers who signal their interest in supporting risk-taking, 'out of the box' thinking and radical interrogation of blind spots and assumptions leading to policy innovation. Drawing from a diversity of funding sources is always preferable to relying on a funding source monoculture but especially so for those pursuing (risking) a transformative status quo critical educational agenda.

#### *Return to First Principles*

In our discussion of education for sustainable development, we have described a concrete experience of collective flight from first principles and root meanings at the World Summit of 2002. For those of us wishing to escape any Faustian bargain, a leitmotiv of our work has to be a return to first principles. Discussion of first principles and meanings is also a vital element in engaging with teachers, community leaders and members, and others with whom we work. Why are we committed to this? What values matter most to us, and why? What values, competencies and dispositions do we think will best realise the future, personal through global, that we are working for? Is anything we are doing or saying - or anything we are not doing or saying - tantamount to trimming on our worldview for short-term influence? If so, what are the attendant dangers and likely consequences? What should we do so as to better achieve a congruent way forward?

## References

- Andreotti, V (2006) 'Soft versus critical global citizenship education' in *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 3, Autumn 2006, pp. 40-51.
- Bourn, D (2009) 'Globalisation and Sustainability: The challenges for education' in *Environmental Scientist*, Vol. 18, 1, pp.12-14, 52.
- Bourn, D (2008) *Global Skills*, London: Learning and Skills Improvement Service.
- CONCORD/DEEEP (2009) *Development Education and the School Curriculum in the European Union: A Report on the Status and Impact of Development Education in the Formal Education Sector and School Curriculum in Member States of the European Union*, available: <http://www.deeep.org/schoolcurricula.html>, (accessed 16 February 2015).
- Chossudovsky, M (1997) *The Globalisation of Poverty: Impacts of IMF and World Bank reforms*, London: Zed Books.
- Daly, H (1996) *Beyond Growth: The economics of sustainable development*, Boston: Beacon.
- Dawkins, R (2006) *The God Delusion*, London: Bantam.
- European Consensus on Development: The Contribution of Development Education and Awareness Raising (2007), available: [http://www.deeep.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/downloads/Consensus\\_on\\_DE/DE\\_Consensus-EN.pdf](http://www.deeep.org/fileadmin/user_upload/downloads/Consensus_on_DE/DE_Consensus-EN.pdf), (accessed 16 February 2015).
- Fien, J and Maclean, R (2010) 'The private sector and education for sustainable development' in UNESCO, *Tomorrow Today*, Paris: Tudor Rose, pp. 52-53.
- Fisher, M (2009) *Capitalist Realism: Is there no alternative?* Winchester: O Books.
- Gutiérrez Perez, J and Pozo Llorente, M T (2005) 'Stuitifera Navis: Institutional tensions, conceptual chaos, and professional uncertainty at the beginning of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development' in *Policy Futures in Education*, Vol. 3, 3, pp. 296-308.
- Global Humanitarian Forum (2009) *The Anatomy of a Silent Crisis*, Geneva: Global Humanitarian Forum Impact Report.
- Hall, B (2002) 'The right to a new utopia: Adult learning and the changing world of work in an era of global capitalism' in E O' Sullivan, A Morrell, M A O'Connor (eds.) *Expanding the Boundary of Transformative Learning*, New York: Palgrave, pp. 35-46.

Hamilton, C (2010) *Requiem for a Species: Why we resist the truth about climate change*, London: Earthscan.

Hawken, P (2007) *Blessed Unrest: How the largest movement in the world came into being and why no one saw it coming*, London: Viking.

Hossay, P (2006) *Unsustainable: A premier for global environmental and social justice*, London: Zed Books.

Huckle, J (2010) 'ESD and the current crisis of capitalism: teaching beyond green new deals' in *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, Vol. 4, 1, pp. 135-142.

Jackson, M G (2003) 'Internationalizing the university curriculum' in *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, Vol. 27, 3, pp. 325-330.

Jickling, B and Wals, A E J (2008) 'Globalization and environmental education' in *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Vol. 40, 1, pp. 1-21.

McIntosh, A (2008) *Hell and High Water: Climate Change, Hope and the Human Condition*, Edinburgh: Birlinn.

Krause, J (2010) *European Development Education Monitoring Report: "DE Watch"*, available: <http://www.deeep.org/dewatch.html>, (accessed 16 February 2015).

Lloyd, B (2009) 'The growth delusion' in *Sustainability*, Vol. 1, pp. 516-536.

McGregor, S (2003) *Consumerism as a Source of Structural Violence*, available: <http://www.kon.org/hswp/archive/consumerism.html>, (accessed: 16 February 2015).

Pelling, M, High, C, Dearing, J and Smith, D (2008) 'Shadow spaces for social learning: A relational understanding of adaptive capacity to climate change within organisations' in *Environment and Planning*, Vol. 40, pp. 867-884.

Rajacic, A, Surian, A, Fricke, H J; Krause, J and Davis, P (2010) *DEAR in Europe ~ Recommendations for Future Interventions by the European Commission. Final Report of the 'Study on the Experience and Actions of the Main European Actors Active in the Field of Development Education and Awareness Raising'*, available: [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/index.php/DEAR\\_Final\\_report](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/index.php/DEAR_Final_report), (accessed 16 February 2015).

Richmond, M (2010) 'Envisioning, coordinating and implementing the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development' in UNESCO (2010) *Tomorrow Today*, Paris: Tudor Rose, pp. 19-22.

Rizvi, F (2004) 'Debating globalization and education after September 11' in *Comparative Education*, Vol. 40, 2, pp. 157-171.

Sangkyoo, K (2010) 'Unlocking the potential of ESD for green growth' in UNESCO (2010) *Tomorrow Today*, Paris: Tudor Rose, pp. 49-51.

Selby, D and Kagawa, F (forthcoming) 'Climate change learning: Unleashing blessed unrest as the heating happens' in *Green Teacher*.

Shiva, V (2008) *Soil Not Oil: Climate change, peak oil and food insecurity*, London: Zed.

Springett, D (2010) 'Education for sustainability in the business studies curriculum' in P Jones, D Selby, and S Sterling (eds.) *Sustainability Education: Perspectives and practice across higher education*, London: Earthscan, pp. 75-92.

Stromquist, N (2002) *Education in a Globalized World: The connectivity of economic power, technology, and knowledge*, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Torres, C A (2009) *Education and Neoliberal Globalization*, New York: Routledge.

UNESCO (2009) *Bonn Declaration*, UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development, 31 March – 2 April 2009, available: [http://www.esd-world-conference-2009.org/fileadmin/download/ESD2009\\_BonnDeclaration080409.pdf](http://www.esd-world-conference-2009.org/fileadmin/download/ESD2009_BonnDeclaration080409.pdf), (accessed 16 February 2015).

UNESCO (2010) *Tomorrow Today*, Paris: Tudor Rose.

Victor, P (2008) *Managing without Growth: Slower by design not disaster*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) *Our Common Future*, WCED, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wells, A S, Carnochan, S, Slayton, J, Allen, R and Vasudeva, A (1998) 'Globalization and educational change' in A Hargreaves (ed.) *International Handbook of Educational Change*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, pp. 322-348.

Woodward, D and Simms, A (2006) *Growth isn't Working: The uneven distribution of benefits and costs from economic growth*, New Economics Foundation, London.

## EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Ros Wade

### Introduction

Since the Earth Summit in 1992, there has been a growing awareness of the need to address issues of sustainability and the terrain subsequently seems to have become more favourable towards education for sustainability (EfS). Governments were very slow to take the initiative on EfS after the first Earth Summit with this role largely taken up by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and committed activists. Their work tended to have two strands: the first comprising support, in the form of training and awareness raising for educational practitioners, and the second concerning advocacy and lobbying for policy change. The EfS programme at London South Bank University (LSBU) was itself a result of this engagement when, in 1993, a consortium of environmental and development NGOs came together to design a course which would support practitioners and activists across the UK. One of its key aims was to support participants in becoming effective agents for change through education.

Since 1992, NGOs have, of course, been actively seeking to strategically influence the national political landscape with regard to EfS and have established alliances in order to navigate the difficult terrain of government policy and practice. In the UK, for example, the Development Education Association (DEA) and Council for Environmental Education (CEE) have had some success in influencing the government, for example through the Commission for Sustainable Development. More specific approaches have also had results, such as Oxfam, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in Wales working toward the incorporation of EfS into statutory educational requirements. However, NGOs and activists have not been the only drivers for change in EfS. The dynamics of change are far more complex than that and, indeed, many NGOs and activists are highly critical of the current understanding of sustainability encapsulated in the more mainstream concept of education for sustainable development (ESD).

Notwithstanding differences over terminology and understandings therein, the policy and practice framework for EfS has developed considerably and in many countries there is now government policy in place in all areas of the formal education sector, from schools to higher education. In addition, national legal requirements on sustainable development in relation to other sectors, such as the built environment, have created space and demand for training at a range of levels. At the international level, education was further endorsed at the second World Summit on Sustainable Development

(WSSD) which took place in Johannesburg in 2002 and also attempted to make links between EfS and Education for All (EFA: basic education as a requirement for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals on poverty reduction). Since UNESCO has been given the task of taking the lead internationally in both EfS and EFA, it made very good sense to bring them together. These efforts have been further supported by the Japanese government's successful lobbying for education for sustainable development to be given the status of a UN Decade from 2005 to 2014. Education is therefore now viewed as a prime lever for social change, described by UNESCO in the implementation plan for the Decade in the following way: 'It means education that enables people to foresee, face up to and solve the problems that threaten life on our planet' (UNESCO, 2005).

Although the terrain seems more promising now for EfS, there are concerns from many EfS commentators, such as David Orr and Stephen Sterling, that progress is too slow and does not go far enough. In fact, Sterling feels that no less than a complete shift in the overall paradigm of education (and by implication society) will result in sustainability. For Sterling, education itself is often part of the problem: 'Far from being an agent of change, education often underpins individualism, unsustainable lifestyles and patterns of consumption, directly or by default' (Sterling, 2005: 10).

### **A Common Language?**

The EfS journey has taken us into uncharted territories with new ideas and concepts, which, in turn, meant the need for a new vocabulary and may eventually require a new language. New ideas are always contested and so debates about terminology have been a key feature of this field from the outset. Sometimes these ideas can seem obscurantist rather than enlightening but they can engender reflection and discussion from very different perspectives and points of view. The term 'education for sustainability' (EfS) was specifically chosen by our LSBU programme team rather than the more mainstream 'education for sustainable development' (ESD), both to critique the very Western-dominated discourse on development and to reflect an openness to alternative perspectives and radical viewpoints encompassed in education for sustainability. EfS also readily facilitates an interpretation of sustainability within a range of scales from the personal and psychological to the organisational, local, national and global. In addition, it shows a willingness to explore the methods and purpose of education and to undertake value commitments openly - education for sustainability - that can bring about sustainable change.

Other terms like 'sustainability education' or 'sustainable education' (Sterling, 2006) are also part of the discourse and need to be acknowledged. Sterling believes that 'sustainability' indicates the need for a change of educational paradigm as a whole, rather than a modification of the existing paradigm, hence the notion of 'sustainable education, where the emphasis is

on the nature of educational thinking, policy and practice as a whole' (Ibid).

Some educators regard the term 'sustainable development' as the process towards an end point of 'sustainability' just as 'sustainable education' could also perhaps be seen as an end point, with ESD as the process towards it. Within this scenario, EfS could be regarded as possessing both the process towards and the vision of sustainability. The proliferation of terms and interpretations related to sustainability arguably reflects a strength and richness in education that we should value. It would be disingenuous to say that terminology is not important but, at the same time, it is essential not to become too caught up in such discussions to the detriment of the development of EfS itself. While bearing these issues in mind, I will use the term EfS in the course of this article.

### Pathways to EfS

Although many educators feel that the ground is now more fertile for EfS, some consider its development to have been rather patchy. According to Leszek Iwaskow, Ofsted Inspector with responsibility for ESD in England and Wales, '[I]f you were to look down on England from above you would probably see a relative desert for ESD. If you homed in there would be some oases of some excellent practice' (Environmental Audit Committee, 2005: 30). Like most complex ideas, the concept of EfS is contested by an array of constituencies, each with its own strong views. This is not really surprising when we consider its history.

Agenda 21 called for environmental education (EE) and development education (DE) to be cross-cutting themes in all education policies and practice (Agenda 21, 1992: 221) with the implication that from this synergy the concept of education for sustainability would somehow emerge. Agenda 21 was the result of a lengthy negotiation involving more than 178 different countries and related power blocks. It was, in its own way, a remarkable achievement as it provided a basis for educators and policy makers to start to develop a more coherent understanding and practice of EfS.

Chapter 36 of Agenda 21 attempted to bring the two existing constituencies of EE and DE into a relationship by brokering the new inclusive concept of EfS. These constituencies undoubtedly have their roots in Western countries which perhaps makes the process less relevant (or not relevant at all) to other parts of the globe. In many Southern and emerging countries, EE and DE issues are very obviously interconnected and not regarded as separate constituencies. In South Africa, for example, Lotz-Sisitka points out that, 'environmental education is strongly focused on the social, political, economic and biophysical dimensions' (Lotz-Sisitka, 2004: 67). She sees, therefore, no perceived dichotomy between social justice and environmental protection. However, this viewpoint is not necessarily always translated into practice. For example, in a review of progress towards Agenda

21 in Kenya, Dorcas Otieno suggests that ‘the environment has been looked at in great detail from the biophysical view but with less emphasis on economic and social perspectives’ (Otieno, 2005).

The separation of DE and EE in the global North illustrates the Western perspective that divides the human and the natural world which many feel is one of the major obstacles to EfS. Therefore, those of us who have been brought up in a Western educational/academic setting may have more to unlearn than those who have not! However, we have to recognise that the dominant paradigm operating in the world today is a Western one and this colours policy at both national and international levels. Moreover, this construction of EfS has been quite strong and has provided both opportunities and constraints.

Nonetheless, over the last decade it has become clear that EfS required a radical re-think of both EE and DE rather than their simple addition and integration. This was never going to be straightforward as there are too many potential contradictions and conflicts of interest. The starting points for Western conceptions of EE and DE can be summarised as below:

Figure 1.

| Environmental Education                                           | Development Education                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Conservation of the natural world is the priority;                | People come first;                                                      |
| People can sometimes be the problem;                              | Poverty reduction, social justice and development is the main priority; |
| Development issues and poverty eradication are secondary to this. | Environmental and conservation issues are secondary to this.            |

It was perhaps rather naïve to believe that two movements, coming from very different starting points could just somehow start to collaborate and work together without difficulty. The starting point for DE was the human and for EE was the natural world, and both concepts operated with contrasting priorities. In addition, in the West there was no history of the development and environmental constituencies working together but rather a degree of mistrust between them. But EfS is surely much more than the sum of DE and EE, and perhaps one of the key constraints to progress is the fact that many people are more concerned with environmental or development issues rather than embracing sustainability as a broad concept encompassing the need to support both nature and humanity. EfS may therefore need to free itself from its EE and DE origins in order to embrace more fully other elements which contribute to EfS, such as sustainable design, alternative energy, earth education, human rights education, conflict resolution, futures education,

anti-racist and inter-cultural education. We need to move towards a clearer, more conceptualised and integrated form of EfS which builds on a range of perspectives and can, in turn, become a catalyst for study across a range of fields and disciplines.

To this end, some have preferred not to take the route of enquiring into the potential of EE and DE for EfS, but have rather enquired into what kind of education might mirror, explore and debate the relationship between environment and society. Some NGOs, such as Oxfam, developed the concept of 'global citizenship' (Oxfam, 1997) in order to integrate the dimensions of EfS from the standpoint of individual rights and responsibilities (Wade, 2001). This is an ethical standpoint based on both local and global mutuality in relation to basic rights, social justice and environmental justice. Some consider this concept too anthropocentric and that it underplays our human dependence on the biosphere and the earth's finite resources. However, since EfS requires and makes central the agency of human beings, this concept can be very helpful in constructing an ethical framework for action (Dower, 2003).

A focus on the nature of education and of sustainability may help us to move beyond the constraints illustrated above. For example, what kind of education is required if we wish to live sustainably? Certainly, current educational practices have been found wanting. According to David Orr:

"Education is no guarantee of decency, prudence or wisdom. Much of the same kind of education will only compound our problems. This is not an argument for ignorance but rather a statement that the worth of education must now be measured against the standards of decency and human survival – the issues now looming so large before us in the twenty first century. It is not education but education of a certain kind that will save us" (Orr, 2004: 8).

Some commentators go so far as to say that education itself is a negative idea which merely divides us by creating 'two classes of people everywhere: the educated and the uneducated or undereducated' (Esteva et al., 2005: 20). They feel that education is often a new means of colonisation of the mind and that it denigrates local and indigenous knowledge and skills. To them, even Paulo Freire's concept of education for transformation implies a certain level of arrogance and hence oppression. They prefer the idea of 'learning' which implies a more active and 'autonomous capacity for building creative relationships with others and with nature, relationships that generate knowing and wisdom' (Ibid: 28).

Education as presently constructed can be broadly divided into three orientations: the vocational/ neo classical, the liberal progressive and the socially critical. Practitioners of EfS tend to position themselves mainly within 'socially critical' education where:

“the teacher is a co-ordinator with emancipatory aims; involves students in negotiation about common tasks and projects; emphasises commonality of concerns; and works through conflicts of interest in terms of social justice and ecological sustainability” (Fien, 1993: 20).

However, this orientation tends to portray knowledge as mainly socially constructed and its critics suggest that it fails to give enough weight to the learning needed to live within the set biophysical boundaries of our world. In addressing some of the issues relating to the politics of knowledge, Janse Van Rensburg identifies one key challenge for educators:

“...to find and use theoretical frameworks which enable the acknowledgement of wider ways of knowing – in ways which open up greater possibilities in the re-conceptualisation of socially and ecologically appropriate development processes” (Van Rensburg, 1999: 18).

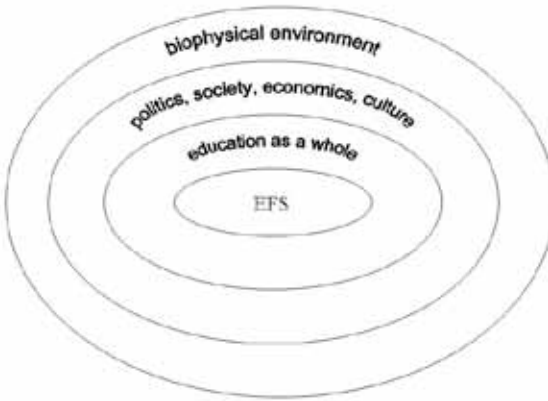
Van Rensburg sees EfS in South Africa as very much a process which both recognises the importance of indigenous knowledge, while also recognising that it is not unproblematic (Ibid, 16). Although EfS is still a contested term, there is considerable consensus that the EfS process offers a ‘holistic approach through recognising the complex, interconnected nature of all aspects of the world around us from an individual to a global level’ (Sterling, 2005: 23). This is also called a systems or relational approach and it emphasises contexts and connections in order to build up whole pictures of phenomena rather than breaking things into individual parts. It is a way of seeing which focuses on processes, patterns and dynamics and, as such, can open up possibilities to look at EfS from outside of the constructs of EE and DE. For example, the EfS programme at LSBU has used the diagram below to explain and explore the relationships between EfS and wider social and ecological systems.

Focus 1- At the centre is education for sustainability

Focus 2- The context of Focus 1 is education as a whole

Focus 3- The context of Focus 2 is the social, economic and cultural environment

Focus 4- The overall context is the biophysical environment as evidenced in the view of the Earth from space (Sterling, 2000).



**Figure 2. Levels of focus**

EfS provides the opportunity (and necessity) to bring together different disciplines. An EfS framework can offer a vehicle for different disciplines to contribute to an understanding of sustainability and, in doing so, translates EfS into terms which they own and understand whilst also drawing on other disciplines as necessary. EfS is about engendering this process of interdisciplinary learning and is also the interface between theory and practice which underpins the development of education for sustainability as a meaningful and challenging field. UNESCO, using the term ‘education for sustainable development’, summarises it as follows:

“ESD is facilitated through participatory and reflective approaches and is characterised by the following:

- 1) is based on the principles of intergenerational equity, social justice, fair distribution of resources and community participation, which underlie sustainable development;
- 2) promotes a shift in mental models which inform our environmental, social and economic decisions;
- 3) is locally relevant and culturally appropriate;
- 4) is based on local needs, perceptions and conditions, but acknowledges that fulfilling local needs often has international effects and consequences;

- 5) engages formal, non-formal and informal education;
- 6) accommodates the evolving nature of the concept of sustainability;
- 7) promotes lifelong learning;
- 8) addresses content, taking into account context, global issues and local priorities;
- 9) builds civil capacity for community-based decision-making, social tolerance, environmental stewardship, adaptable workforce and quality of life;
- 10) is cross disciplinary. No one discipline can claim ESD as its own, but all disciplines can contribute to ESD;
- 11) uses a variety of pedagogical techniques that promote participatory learning and critical reflective skills” (UNESCO, 2007).

For the last decade the international EfS learning community at LSBU has been actively contributing to a growing understanding of EfS and, interestingly, many in this learning community do not come from EE or DE backgrounds, but from other disciplines such as peace education, trades union education, health education and business education. The UN Decade of ESD will provide an opportunity for different elements of EfS to come together in a more joined-up approach to influence educational and social change. This is an immense challenge for educators but it is essential for EfS that we step out of our comfort zones and re-think the fundamental questions in new ways:

- What kind of society do we want or need in order to achieve sustainability?
- What kind of economic and political system could allow this?
- What kind of education system do we need to achieve this?

Drawing from over 15 years of experience working in EfS, I will outline some key elements which may help to answer these questions by providing opportunities for new ways of thinking towards a new paradigm of education.

## Developing EfS: Essential Elements

### A) Cross-Sectoral and Inter-Disciplinary Approaches

The EfS programme at LSBU was founded on the principle of cross-sectoral and inter-disciplinary collaboration that involves bringing together a team working in different disciplines and sectors, including higher education, schools, community education, NGOs and business. While EfS forums and networks operating at a local level are particularly supportive of cross-sectoral learning, NGOs can be a catalyst for this approach as they often work across sectors. At government and policy level, sectors (as well as departments) are often very isolated from each other so local examples of successful EfS initiatives can often provide a catalyst for central government policy.

With regard to inter-disciplinarity, commentators such as Sayer argues that it is particularly important for social scientists and their natural science counterparts to enter into dialogue. 'Science or the production of any kind of knowledge is a social practice. For better or worse (not just worse) the conditions and social relations of the production of knowledge influence its content' (Sayer, 1992:6). Maiteny and Parker emphasise the importance of methods in relation to EfS and go on to stress that the understanding of such relationships and phenomena 'can be enhanced by using an essentially scientific method - i.e. by devising hypotheses and then testing them out through observation and experience' (Maiteny and Parker, 2002: 25).

For EfS to be most effective, structures need to be reconfigured to allow cross-sectoral and joined-up thinking. This is one of the greatest challenges for EfS, as structures in formal education especially often fail to support inter-disciplinarity and sometimes actively work against it. This is not to denigrate specialist knowledge, rather to recognise that the challenge of sustainability requires new thinking and synergy across current subject specialties.

### B) Sharing Diverse Perspectives

In a world dominated by neo-liberal perspectives, it is important for alternative voices and perspectives to be heard, especially those which challenge the current hegemony. This is not to be negative about all Western perspectives (or even all neo-liberal ones) but we do need to be wary about allowing the dominant discourse which has led us to our current unsustainable lifestyles to drown out other voices. At the same time, we should not forget that some of the strongest critiques of current neo-liberal and neo-conservative policies come, in fact, from Western thought and commentators. However, learning our way out of unsustainability requires open-mindedness in approaching new (and sometimes old) ways of thinking, for example, from local and indigenous knowledge and diverse philosophical perspectives.

### **C) Broadening the Concept of Education**

EfS, as currently aligned, tends to focus too much on the formal statutory education sector and on training and curriculum development. The formal education sector will always be under the strong influence and control of government and, while EfS practitioners have made significant inroads into these agendas, they are arguably still dominated by the perceived demands of the economy and current dominant neo-liberal perspectives. Education outside the formal sector, such as youth and community education, NGO education, business education, and civil service education, may offer more opportunities for the study and development of EfS. While more and more time today is spent in formal education, it is clearly becoming increasingly important for EfS practitioners to be able to influence agendas in non-formal as well as formal education. If we accept that EfS is a lifelong process, then there are many entry points at which we can begin to engage with sustainability issues. We are also influenced by an ever-widening range of communication channels that can stimulate our interest in EfS beyond formal education and professional development.

### **D) Linking the Personal and Professional**

Many of us lead lives which are divided into very separate realms: we think we hold certain values but do not always put them into practice, not always consciously or deliberately, but sometimes out of habit, inertia or inhibiting structures. Kumar and Selby argue that the psychological or spiritual dimensions of change are just as important or perhaps more important than the political dimension because our core values form the basis for our actions. 'The real impetus for ecological sustainability and social justice stems from ethical, aesthetic and spiritual visions' (Kumar, 2005). He adds that:

“the problem is not matter but materialism...The moment we encapsulate an idea or a thought into an ‘ism’ we lay the foundations of dualistic thought. The universe is uni-verse, one song, one poem, one verse” (Kumar, 2005).

Kumar and others regard our Western dualistic contradictions between mind and body as being responsible for many of our present problems of unsustainability. For example, at a very basic level we may know in our heads that our behaviour is contributing to the increase in greenhouse gases but unless we really believe and feel at an affective level that it is important to address this problem, we will not act to change. At a recent workshop that I ran for MA Education students in Chichester, they were asked to identify three events or experiences which influenced their personal journeys towards an interest in EfS. Some students felt that this had been a very gradual process and cited their upbringing and backgrounds, others mentioned books or films, and some could even trace their development to a particular critical

moment when their whole awareness changed. Sustainable living demands nothing less than a complete change in our relationship with others and the world, a change in our way of being, something we might call an ontological epiphany (Wade, 2006).

This is not easy when the structures we live in encourage us to live unsustainably. We therefore need to be convinced at the deepest level if we are to try to change, otherwise any change that does occur tends to be first order or superficial rather than substantive. When values become shared at an affective level, the possibilities for social change increase exponentially. As Maiteny and Parker suggest:

“Shared belief and meaning is a sort of cultural glue that makes sense of experience and relationships. It is vital to the process of social cohesion and sustainability and personal responsibility for one’s role within the social context” (Maiteny and Parker, 2002: 352).

### **E) Understanding the Complex Processes of Change**

Understanding some of the dynamics of change is essential for EfS practitioners who aspire to be agents of change. The development of motivational and leadership skills in oral, visual and written communication (such as report writing, strategic thinking and planning) needs to be part of a broad portfolio. The most effective change is never top-down or bottom-up but a mixture of the two and, in effecting positive change, we can also learn from business and management analyses where organisations have to adapt constantly to changing conditions or go under. ‘Organisations are not just organisms, evolving and adapting as environments change. They are made up of people: thinking, conscious, able to make choices about what they do’ (Binney and Williams, 1997: 158).

‘Leadership’ is not a word that educationalists are always comfortable with because of some negative associations with didacticism and directorial management. However, leadership is something that we need to embrace if EfS is to be effective; a form of leadership which supports and promotes values of sustainability, involves a strong commitment to participation and collaboration but does not hide behind these commitments when it is appropriate to take a lead.

In a discussion at a recent EfS conference, there was a strong feeling that EfS practitioners too often shy away from acting as leaders or spokespersons and surrender the field of leadership to a small (often self-appointed) but well-connected group of individuals who have the confidence to put themselves forward. Sometimes this can be advantageous if they can articulate and inspire interest in EfS, but this needs to be backed up with commitments to participation and democratic involvement.

### F) A Lifelong Learning Process

We need to work from the premise that EfS is an affirmative, lifelong learning process, where much of our learning will take place outside the formal sector. If we invite formal, statutory education processes to embed learning for sustainability we could wait indefinitely to develop a society with the capacity to live sustainably. Moreover, the formal curriculum, as currently construed, does not seem to be the most effective conduit for this kind of sustainable learning. For example, a survey among secondary school pupils in the UK discovered that they were turned off by learning about environmental issues in citizenship lessons (Oxfam, 2006: 6). This probably says more about the way these young people were being taught than the content as the same survey suggested that students wanted issues tackled in ‘more depth’ and ‘to discuss more in smaller groups’ (Ibid: 7).

Further research by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) in the UK indicates that committed and motivated teachers, combined with a supportive school ethos, made a huge difference to pupils’ attitudes to environmental issues (Morris and Schagen, 1995). There are, of course, dangers in seeing lifelong learning and formal education as a panacea for sustainability. Indeed, many argue that formal education is currently dominated by the technical/vocational model of education and its main rationale is ‘to raise skill levels and enhance the knowledge base of individuals so that they may operate more effectively in a fluctuating labour market’ (Blewitt, 2005: 27).

More opportunity for EfS perhaps lies within non-formal processes where there is potential for a lifelong learning for sustainability which is critical and, emancipatory. Such processes emerge:

“from a reflexive relationship between thinking about priorities and the actual experience of living in the world, of making a living and protecting the prospects of the next generation during a period of change” (Ibid: 36).

Blewitt cites as examples the work in developing sustainable neighbourhoods and social inclusivity by organisations such as the Community Development Foundation and Groundwork in the UK. ‘The informal learning opportunities that these initiatives created are profoundly important aspects of non-formal lifelong learning’ (Ibid: 34).

The lifelong learner for sustainability needs to be part of a learning community and ‘an active and creative explorer of the world; a reflexive agent; a self-actualising agent and an integrator of learning’ (Medel-Anonuevo, Ohsako and Mauch in Blewitt, 2005: 26). EfS requires a concept of lifelong learning which recognises the imperative of learning for sustainability as a shared human project in a rapidly changing world where none of us has

all the answers. Opportunities for learning are all around us; as educators perhaps our main responsibility is to recognise them.

### **G) Making EfS an International Movement**

Encouragingly, some commentators such as David Orr and Andres Edwards already sense the beginnings of paradigm change in a ‘sustainability revolution’ which is taking place ‘below the radar screen and outside the cultural buzz’ (Orr, 2005: xiv in Edwards, 2005):

“It is happening first at the periphery of power and wealth, where revolutions often start. It is evident in farmers beginning to mimic natural systems in order to reserve their soil and land...It is evident in the burgeoning interest in green building, green architecture, green engineering...It is evident in a new religious sensibility across the full spectrum, of faith traditions that regard stewardship of the Earth as obligatory...It is evident in education and the emergence of new ways to think about the human role in nature that stretch our perspective to whole systems and out to the far horizon of imagination” (Orr, 2005: xiv).

Edwards presents evidence for a growing movement of sustainability advocates across the globe and identifies five characteristics of this ‘revolution’:

- Remarkable similarities among sustainability groups in overall intentions and objectives;
- A large and diverse number of such groups;
- A wide range of issues addressed by these groups;
- Leadership by a group of decentralised visionaries rather than a single charismatic figurehead;
- Varying modes of action – oppositional and alternative (Edwards, 2005: 7).

Some educationalists have had difficulties with the idea of being part of a movement as they felt that it had implications of being partisan and ideologically biased. Yet engagement with EfS necessarily involves working toward a more equitable and environmentally sustainable society. However, it is important to recognise that this is a process where no one group, ideology, sector or country has all the answers. Therefore it is perfectly possible, indeed, I would argue, essential to be part of an open-minded movement which is advocating as well as seeking change.

### **Conclusion**

Many people and organisations across the world see the broad framework of EfS as an opportunity to place themselves and their work in the context

of a movement. There is much to be gained from this, including a sense of solidarity, the potential for sharing ideas and learning from different global perspectives. The UN Decade for ESD can assist by providing a framework for network building, events and initiatives. The internet too provides a powerful tool for communication and building networks, such as the 'E-learning community' of students and alumni which forms part of LSBU's EfS programme. Building a movement takes time but with the growing awareness of the effects of climate change, the core enthusiasts of EfS may suddenly find themselves in demand as leaders of a rapidly expanding movement.

To some extent this is happening already with an increasing demand for courses and awareness raising on issues of sustainability from a wide range of sectors. It is becoming clear that we will need to raise our game over the next decade if EfS is to become a dynamic process which can enable us all to learn to live sustainably. Human beings are very adaptive and intelligent beings who have learned to live unsustainably in rather a short space of time. Time is of the essence as it has become clear that some of the effects of climate change are already unstoppable. Our challenge for the future well-being of the planet and of human life is to learn – very quickly – how to live sustainably.

## References

- Bach, H, 'Critical reader to Unit 7 of the EfS programme', London South Bank University, unpublished.
- Blewitt, J (2005) 'Sustainability and Lifelong Learning' in J Blewitt and C Cullingford (eds.) *The Sustainability Curriculum*, London: Earthscan.
- Binney, G and Williams, C (1997) *Leaning into the Future: Changing the Way People Change Institutions*, London: Nicholas Brearley Publishing.
- Bourn, D (2001) 'Global Perspectives in Lifelong Learning' in *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 325-338.
- Bowe, R, Ball, S and Gold, A (1992) *Reforming Education and Changing schools*, London: Routledge.
- Castells, M (1996) *The Rise of the Network Society*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Dower, N (2003) *Global Citizenship: A Critical Introduction*, New York: Routledge.
- Edwards, A R (2005) *The Sustainability Revolution: Portrait of a Paradigm Shift*, Gabriola Island: New Society Publishers.
- Environmental Audit Committee (2005) 'Environmental Education: Follow up to learning the sustainability lesson: Fifth report of session 2004-05, Volume II', London: House of Commons.
- Esteva, G, Stuchul, D L and Prakash, M S (2005) 'From a Pedagogy for Liberation to Liberation from Pedagogy' in C Bowers and F Apffel-Marglin (eds.) *Re-thinking Freire: Globalisation and the Environmental Crisis*, London: Taylor & Francis.
- Freire, P (1985) *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation*, London: Macmillan.
- Fien, J (1993) *Education for the Environment: Critical Curriculum Theorising and Environmental Education*, New York: Hyperion Books.
- Fien, J (2000) 'Listening to the voice of youth: implications for educational reform' in D Yencken, J Fien and H Sykes (eds.) *Environment, Education and Society in the Asia Pacific: Local Traditions and Global Discourses*, London: Routledge.
- Gladwell, M (2000) *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*, Boston: Little Brown and Company.
- Ginsburg, M, Cooper, S, Raghu, R and Zegarra, H (1991) 'Educational Reform: social struggle, the state and the world economic system' in M Ginsburg (ed.) *Understanding*

- Educational Reform in Global Context: Economy, Ideology and the State*, London: Routledge.
- Henderson, H and Ikeda, D (2004) *Planetary Citizenship*, Santa Monica: Middleway Press.
- Hicks, D (2002) *Lessons for the Future: The Missing Dimension in Education*, London: Routledge Falmer.
- Hren, B and Birney, A (n.d.) 'Learning for Sustainability. Pathways: A Development Framework for School Sustainability', Surrey: WWF-UK.
- Huckle, J and Sterling, S (eds.) (1996) *Education for Sustainability*, London: Earthscan.
- Inman, S and Rogers, M (eds.) (2006) *Building a Sustainable Future: Challenges for Initial Teacher Education*, Surrey: CCCi LSBU/WWF-UK.
- Kuhn, T (1962) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kumar, S (2005) 'Spiritual Imperative' in *Resurgence Magazine*, Issue 229, available: <http://www.resurgence.org/2005/kumarspirit229.htm>, (accessed 16 February 2015).
- Lotz-Sisitka, H (2004) 'Positioning southern Africa environmental education in a changing context' Howick: SADC Regional Education Programme/Share-Net.
- Lovelock, J (2006) 'The Earth is about to catch a morbid fever that may last as long as 100,000 years', *The Independent*, 16 January.
- Maiteny, P and Parker, J (2002) 'Unit 6 Study Guide: Science and Culture in Education for Sustainability', London: Distance Learning Centre, South Bank University.
- McLellan, D (1979) *Marxism after Marx*, London: Macmillan.
- Medel-Añonuevo, C, Ohsako, T and Mauch, W (2005) 'Revisiting Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century', in J Blewitt, and C Cullingford (eds.) *The Sustainability Curriculum*, London: Earthscan.
- Orr, D (2004) *Earth in Mind: On Education, the Environment and the Human Prospect*, Island Press, Washington, D.C.
- Orr, D (2005) 'Preface' in A R Edwards, *The Sustainability Revolution: Portrait of a Paradigm Shift*, Gabriola Island: New Society Publishers.
- Otieno, D (2005) 'Towards Developing an Education for Sustainable Development Strategy for Kenya: Experiences and Perspectives', Kenya Organisation for Environmental Education (KOEI), available: <http://www.ceeindia.org/esf/download/paper44.pdf>, (accessed 16 February 2015).

Oxfam (1997) *A Curriculum for Global Citizenship*, Oxford: Oxfam.

Oxfam (2006) 'Pupils' Voices on Citizenship Education and the global dimension', Oxfam, Save the Children, Unicef, DfID, NEAD, Manchester DEP, Cheshire DE Centre.

Parker, J (2008) 'Inter disciplinary approaches to EfS', in J Parker and R Wade, *Journeys around Education for Sustainability*, London: LSBU, London.

Porritt, J (2006) *Capitalism as if the Earth Matters*, London: Earthscan.

Sachs, J (2006) 'Interview by Jonathan Watts', *The Guardian*, 26 August, available: <http://education.guardian.co.uk/higher/news/story/0,,1858783,00.html>, (accessed 16 February 2015).

Sayer, A (1992) *Method in Social Science: A Realist Approach*, London: Routledge.

Scott, W (2003) 'Sustainable Development, Policy and Learning: exploring relationships', a speech by William Scott at the Council for Environmental Education Policy Forum on 18 November 2003, available:

<http://www.bath.ac.uk/cree/resources/SCOTT%20CEE%20POLICY%20Talk%2011%2003.pdf>, (accessed 16 February 2015).

Selby, D (2007) 'The need for climate change in education', available:

[http://www.bneportal.de/coremedia/generator/pm/en/Issue\\_\\_001/Downloads/01\\_\\_Contributions/Selby.pdf](http://www.bneportal.de/coremedia/generator/pm/en/Issue__001/Downloads/01__Contributions/Selby.pdf).

Smyth, J, Blackmore, C and Harvey, T (1997) 'Education for sustainability at the UN: making progress?' in *The Environmentalist*, Vol. 17, No. 3, September 1997, pp. 173-179.

Sterling, S (2005) 'Unit 7 Study Guide: Education for Sustainability: education in change,' London: Distance Learning Centre, South Bank University.

Sterling, S (2001) *Sustainable Education: Re-Visioning Learning and Change*, (Schumacher Briefings No. 6), Dartington: Green Books Foxhole.

Sterling, S, Maiteny, P, Irving, D, Salter, J, (n.d.) *Linkingthinking Surrey*: WWF-UK.

Tilbury, D, Stevenson, R S, Fien, J and Schreuder, D (eds.) (2002) *Education and Sustainability: Responding to the Global Challenge*, Cambridge: Commission on Education and Communication, IUCN.

UNESCO (2005) *UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014*, available:

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001403/140372e.pdf>, (accessed 16 February 2015).

UNESCO (2007) 'Introductory Note on ESD – DESD Monitoring & Evaluation Framework', Paris: UNESCO.

United Nations (1992) 'Agenda 21', available: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/index.htm>, (accessed 16 February 2015).

United Nations (1996) 'Promoting education, public awareness and training: report of the Secretary General Report of the 4th session UN Commission on Sustainable development', document prepared by UNESCO in its role as chapter 36 Task manager, Paris: UNESCO.

Van Rensburg, J (1999) 'Strands weaving, southern African dreams of development, education and sustainability' in *The Development Education Journal*, Vol. 5 No. 2, February 1999, London.

Waddell, S (2005) *Societal Learning and Change*, Sheffield: Greenleaf.

Wade, R (2006) 'Identifying the issues' in S Inman and M Rogers (eds.) *Building a Sustainable Future: Challenges for Initial Teacher Education*, Surrey: CCCi LSBU/WWF-UK.

Wade, R (2007) 'ESD Education for Sustainability: intellectual greenwash or academic discipline whose time has come?' in *Sustain*, August.

Wade, R (forthcoming publication) 'Education for Sustainable Development' in D Hicks and C Holden (eds.) *The Challenge of Global Education*, London: Routledge.

Wade, R (2007) 'Sustainable Development' in D Hicks & C Holden (eds.) *Teaching the Global Dimension*, Routledge, London.

Yencken, D (2000) *Environment, Education and Society in the Asia Pacific: Local Traditions and Global Discourses*, London: Routledge.

## SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION: TOWARDS A DEEP LEARNING RESPONSE TO UNSUSTAINABILITY

Stephen Sterling

“This century may well be one of relearning on a grand scale across society...necessitating a metamorphosis of many of our current education and learning constructs” (Williams, 2004: 4).

It was early 2001, and the publisher of the Schumacher Briefings and I were having a chat in his office about the title of the new education Briefing. I had just made a bid for ‘Sustainable Education’. His reply was along the lines: ‘surely, you mean “education for sustainable development”, or “education for sustainability” don’t you? Are you implying “education that lasts?” - it doesn’t make a lot of sense’.

‘No’, I said, ‘I don’t want to call it education ‘for’ anything, and yes, ‘Sustainable Education’ is exactly the title I want’. The reason I went for this title, is that I wanted it to provoke a little cognitive dissonance and the question: ‘what does that mean?’ I wanted people to move from ‘how do we educate for sustainable development’ towards deeper attention to education itself: its paradigms, policies, purposes and practices (these are linked of course) and its adequacy for the age we find ourselves in. In the Briefing, I define sustainable education as:

“a change of educational culture, one which develops and embodies the theory and practice of sustainability in a way which is critically aware. It is therefore a transformative paradigm which values, sustains and realises human potential in relation to the need to attain and sustain social, economic and ecological well being, recognising that they must be part of the same dynamic” (Sterling, 2001: 22).

I came to this position through some 30 years of working in environmental and sustainability education - increasingly realising that sustainability logically necessitates a deep learning response in educational thinking and practice as it does in myriad other human activities, whether economics and business, design and construction, agriculture and energy, trade and aid, health and so on. Ever since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972) education has been identified in international conferences, reports and agreements as key to addressing environment and development issues. Yet, over three decades later, most

education still makes little or no reference to these issues. At the same time, sustainability issues are becoming ever more critical. It seems education is a slow learner! In fact, I would argue that formal education largely remains part of the problem of unsustainability. I acknowledge and greatly welcome the much higher profile that ‘education for sustainable development’ (ESD) has achieved in the last couple of years or so – bolstered significantly by the UN Decade of ESD – but this apparent progress may mask the deeper challenge, not least as ‘ESD’ hides an uncomfortable tension between accommodating and radical transformist approaches.

We need to recognise the underlying factors and ideas which still make most educational practice a servant of the past, and – importantly – articulate a persuasive and practicable alternative. As regards the first challenge, I would point to the continuing influence of reductionism, objectivism, materialism and dualism allied to an uncritical and growth-oriented consumerist culture. These ideas might not be consciously recognised by most practising educators, but they are no less powerful. They are part of the subterranean geology of education, invisible but reflected in the educational landscape above the surface: single disciplines, separate departments, abstract and bounded knowledge, belief in value-free knowing, privileging of cognitive/intellectual knowing over affective and practical knowing, transmissive pedagogy, analysis over synthesis, and so on.

As regards the second challenge, I argue that we need an educational culture and practice adequate and appropriate to the volatile, densely interconnected, and dangerously vulnerable world that we have created. Instead of educational thinking and practice that tacitly assumes that the future is some kind of linear extension of the past, we need what I call an anticipative education, recognising the new conditions and discontinuities which face present generations, let alone future ones: the massive challenges of global warming, species extinction, economic vulnerability, social fragmentation and migration, endemic poverty, the end of cheap energy, and more positively, the rise of localism, participative democracy, green purchasing, ethical business, and efforts to achieve a low carbon economy. The heart of such an education is an ecological orientation. Other descriptors which help capture this sense are ‘holistic’, ‘systemic’ and ‘participative’; they indicate a redesigned educational paradigm that is in essence relational, engaged, ethically oriented, and locally and globally relevant. Mary Catherine Bateson suggests:

“Our machines, our value systems, our educational systems will all have to be informed by (the) switch, from the machine age when we tried to design schools to be like factories, to an ecological age, when we want to design schools, families and social institutions in terms of maintaining the quality of life, not just for our species, but for the whole planet” (Bateson, 1997: 84).

Hence, the concept of ‘sustainable education’, a term which suggests not just a simple ‘add-on’ of sustainability concepts to some parts of the curriculum, but a cultural shift in the way we see education and learning. Rather than a piecemeal, bolt-on, fragmentary response which leaves the mainstream otherwise untouched, it implies systemic change in thinking and practice, informed by what can be called more ecological thinking and values – essentially a new paradigm emerging around the poles of holism, systemic thinking, sustainability and complexity. This offers the possibility of education that is appropriate and responsive to the new systemic conditions of uncertainty and complexity that are reflected in the headlines everyday; one that nurtures the increasingly important qualities of adaptability, creativity, self-reliance, hope and resilience in learners.

In writing the 2001 briefing ‘Sustainable Education’, I tried to indicate why we need to critique the narrow instrumentalism and managerialism that has affected so much educational thinking and practice. I outlined the possibility of a unifying theory of education and learning which integrates the best of past liberal education practice with the newer emphases on transformative learning, capacity building, creativity and adaptive management that are considered part of the new sustainability agenda, and suggested steps to help achieve constructive change at all levels.

Sustainable education implies four descriptors: educational policy and practice which is sustaining, tenable, healthy and durable.

- Sustaining: it helps sustain people, communities and ecosystems;
- Tenable: it is ethically defensible, working with integrity, justice, respect and inclusiveness;
- Healthy: it is itself a viable system, embodying and nurturing healthy relationships and emergence at different system levels;
- Durable: it works well enough in practice to be able to keep doing it.

There is nothing particularly mysterious about this. In the nineties imposition of managerial and economist values on education, evidenced in the whole panoply of endless testing, inspection, precise learning outcomes, performance indicators, marketisation and so on, and in the disillusion and mounting stress levels that accompanied this drive, we were in danger of losing our sense of authentic education, of caring, of community, of engagement, of empowerment and meaningful purpose. Consequently, an ecological view implies putting relationship back into education and learning - seeking synergy and coherence between all aspects of education: ethos, curriculum, pedagogy, management, procurement and resource use, architecture and community links. The emphasis is on such values as respect,

trust, participation, community, ownership, justice, participative democracy, openness, sufficiency, conservation, critical reflection, emergence and a sense of meaning: an education which is sustaining of people, livelihoods and ecologies.

Unfortunately, the term 'sustainable education', with a few welcome exceptions, has often been bundled in by writers as synonymous with 'sustainability education', 'education for sustainability' and 'ESD'. These terms represent worthy developments but do not necessarily connote the need for deep change in educational values, assumptions and practices. In response to the crisis of unsustainability, most educators – and increasingly, politicians – will ask 'what learning needs to take place amongst students?' This is a perfectly valid and important question, but it begs a prior and deeper question: what changes, and what learning needs to take place amongst policymakers, amongst senior management, amongst teachers, lecturers, support staff, amongst parents, amongst employers, etc., so that education itself can be more transformative and appropriate to our times?

The first question stays within what learning theorists call first order change, that is, more of the same: change which doesn't affect the system as a whole. But what if the system itself needs changing? This invokes at least second order change which involves a re-examination of assumptions – towards a shift of consciousness, a changed intelligence which is both connective and collective. This is a deeper and systemic learning response, which needs to happen in three areas: personal, organisational and the community (social learning beyond formal education). The most resistant area is change in the institution and organisation but this is being squeezed by growing awareness of individuals at one level; and evident shifts in social values and behaviours at the level of community and public debate.

Envisioning this change and taking realisable, practicable steps in our own working contexts is key. In essence, what we all are engaged in here is a critically important second order 'learning about learning' process; one which will directly affect the chances of a more sustainable future for all. As a UNESCO report points out (2002), just as we have learnt to live unsustainably, we now need to learn how to live sustainably. Such learning for responsibility requires educational systems, institutions and educators to develop response-ability – that is, the competence and will to address the considerable challenge and opportunity that sustainability presents. This is the context for any meaningful discussion about the role of education in the 21st century.

## References

Bateson, M C (1997) 'Understanding Natural Systems', in C Zelov and P Cousineau, *Design Outlaws on the Ecological Frontier*, Philadelphia: Knossus Publishing.

Sterling, S (2001) *Sustainable Education – Re-Visioning Learning and Change*, Dartington: Schumacher Society Briefing no. 6, Green Books.

Williams, R (2004) 'See Change: Learning and education for sustainability', New Zealand Parliamentary Commission for the Environment.

UNESCO (2002) 'Education for Sustainability – From Rio to Johannesburg: Lessons learnt from a decade of commitment', Paris: UNESCO.

**SECTION THREE:**  
**DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND THE**  
**GLOBAL SOUTH**

## STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS TO GLOBAL SOUTH ACTOR INVOLVEMENT IN DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION IN IRELAND

Son Gyoh

### Introduction

This article highlights underlying structural contradictions implicit in the participation of Ireland's minority ethnic communities in development education (DE) in Ireland and the United Kingdom (UK). It begins by attempting to identify a conceptual framework of DE practice in Ireland within the context of two dominant approaches. It then argues that the methodologies and conceptual framework that underpin mainstream funding of DE provide little space for global South actor participation. This limits the role and relevance of global South actors in pedagogical discourse on the delivery of DE. The article concludes that the absence of a discernable theoretical framework to inform DE practice makes the identification of capacity building needs difficult and therefore encumbers the prospects of funding capacity building projects against other competing priorities. For the purpose of this article, a theoretical framework is defined as a body of knowledge that serves to interpret a given phenomenon or set of principles on which the logic of an activity is based, while a conceptual framework is a set of articulated ideas upon which a desired activity or course of action is constructed.

The article draws upon my experience as a participant in a 2008 Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) conference in Dublin, titled 'Opportunities and Challenges: Minority Ethnic Communities and Development Education in Ireland'. Researching the conference paper provided an opportunity to undertake an in-depth analysis of some of the key issues that emerged from the conference plenary sessions.

### External Constraints

In mapping the barriers to global South participation in DE, four key factors were identified as 'external influences' that hinder fuller participation: the highly structured approach to DE; the dominance of DE by large non-governmental organisations (NGOs); poor regional presence of leading DE organisations; and the overarching influence of state multicultural agendas (Gyoh, 2008). I have divided these factors into three categories, with the last two factors under one heading: the absence of a strategic framework for global South engagement in DE. This reorganisation is informed by two assumptions: first, that government intercultural education agendas have negatively influenced global South actor activity due to an absence of a clear conceptual framework on DE practice. Second, that poor regional presence

of mainstream actors is a result of the funding constraints emanating from implications of the first two listed factors.

Development education delivery in Ireland is similar to that in the UK, where NGOs have pioneered work in this area (Smith, 2004). While Oxfam, CAFOD and the Department for International Development (DfID) play leading roles in influencing DE in the UK, Concern, Trócaire and Irish Aid occupy similar positions in Ireland. I include government agencies with NGOs as organisations that define DE delivery because of the influence they exert through funding guidelines and close ties with the major NGOs. Ireland and the UK have also seen the emergence of 'second tier' DE-focused organisations, such as the One World Centres, that have a mandate to promote public awareness, debates, dialogue and linkages at community level (Andreotti, 2006; <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie>). In Ireland particularly, the hegemony of big NGOs in the DE sector persists as a result of the embedded nature of their relationship with the state international development funding apparatus. These NGOs, with strong government support, dominate the sector in defining the nature of learning resources available to schools and organisations as well as the direction of government policy. However, the NGO charity/aid approach to DE has not come without its own drawbacks, as it walks the line between the perspective dilemma of sympathy for charity donations and empathy for global reflection and action.

### **Gap in Theoretical Premise**

An underlying factor restricting global South participation in development education in Ireland and the UK is the absence of a theoretical framework outlining DE's approach to development. This fundamental gap promotes and sustains an inconsistent regime of DE practice, where actors mix and match conceptual frameworks that are inconsistent with DE's defining ethos of motivating action and challenging values that sustain existing global economic relations. Concepts and issues of poverty, diversity, interdependence, injustice, debt, unequal trade, etc., have contested and conflicting interpretations under different development theories and it is important to adopt a consistent framework. Beside the tensions this gap generates in the arena of pedagogy, the absence of a theoretical framework has created caveats in the practice of DE compounding the North/South power polarity in promoting dialogue and enquiry (McCollum, 1996; Starkey, 1994; Andreotti, 2006). It leads to the question of what framework or values of 'development' are we promoting? Is it the neo-liberal, basic needs, dependency, post-development, reflexive paradigm or a hybrid model yet to be defined? Are there disparities in the perception of advocacy in DE practice in the global North and the South? A theoretical framework is important for consistency in message, dialogue, and pedagogy with implications for downstream actor capacity building.

## **Learning-centred Approach (Education) versus Campaign and Advocacy**

Development education practice appears to have diverged into two broad approaches. The first is the learning-centred approach which promotes knowledge, dialogue and enquiry towards global citizenship values and action (UNICEF, 1992: 47). This approach describes DE as an 'educational process aimed at increasing awareness...and better understanding of global interdependence...' (DICE, 2008: 20-22). The second approach, as defined by the United Nations (UN), emphasises advocacy towards understanding the underlying causes of underdevelopment and working towards a new global economic order (Hicks and Towley, 1988). While the educational approach looks to new sets of values and attitudes to motivate action at individual and group level, it is pursued through structured pedagogical processes. The campaign and advocacy approach on the other hand, emphasises challenging the existing global order at individual and institutional level through civil society solidarity.

The two strands are arguably more complementary than mutually exclusive as they both aim at challenging the root causes of underdevelopment (Starkey, 1994). The tension between these approaches resides more in methodology, yet they share a potential to interface in a reciprocal way within one theoretical framework. The educational process paradigm has started a search for an action component of DE, a gap easily filled by the campaigning and advocacy approach. However, a combination of factors emanating from the prevailing funding environment and a lack of clarity around the conceptual framework for DE practice has led to tension in the mutual application of the two methodologies (Foubert, 1986: 122).

## **Gaps in the Educational Approach**

The exclusionary nature of the educational process approach may be the most persistent structural barrier to global South participation in DE. It emphasises knowledge production through the application of structured educational materials and processes aimed at providing individuals with information and skills to engender global citizenship in the global North with a view to motivating civil society action for change (Smith, 2006). In practice, this approach relies on a high level of expertise linked to the formal education structure, leaving marginal space for input from global South actors. Quite frequently, the processes of dialogue and enquiry occur mainly at conferences and academic seminars with poor representation from the global South. This model of DE practice follows a pattern where the mainstream funders and NGOs adopt an operational definition which combines elements of citizenship education with a brand of advocacy built on 'pedagogical practices' (Irish Aid Funding Guidelines, 2008: 7). The concept of advocacy as a 'pedagogical practice' pushes for the inclusion of DE in the national

education curriculum, contrasting with Southern participants' objective of mobilising institutional change through the use of campaigns.

The structured educational approach offers very little career and capacity building prospects for global South actors, and confines their involvement to rudimentary aspects of cultural awareness. Under such circumstances, even where opportunities such as mini-grants are available, global South actors may be unsure how they can fit into the agenda. The limited uptake by black and minority ethnic (BME) groups to a DfID mini-grant scheme, as reported in a publication by the One World Centre of Northern Ireland (presently the Centre for Global Education), may be an indication of this structural gap (One World Centre for Northern Ireland, 2004). The educational approach appears content with sustaining an identifiable pool of satellite global South organisations that serve the purpose of an information repository to feed the specific needs of mainstream organisations. The predominance of this approach in Ireland projects DE practice as academic, abstract and elitist, with little space for true dialogue and the enhanced participation of Southern stakeholders.

### **Imperatives of Funding Environment**

Development education funding guidelines are shaped by institutions that are themselves powerful actors in the field. These institutions include large NGOs and state international aid development programmes. This dual actor/funder role solidifies a partisan resource allocation environment where less powerful actors struggle to align themselves with the interest and work patterns of the larger, more recognisable institutions. With few exceptions, global South actors are effectively marginalised from this funding arrangement and unable to experience organisational growth.

Although capacity building for global South actors has been acknowledged as increasingly important in planning and funding DE initiatives, training projects aimed at Southern actors have not attracted adequate funding attention in the Republic of Ireland. As a leading global South organisation in Ireland comments, 'training initiatives fail to attract funding...there seems to be a confusion on the context of what capacity building funders really mean'. The funding establishment is usually slow to respond to the less routine and emerging challenges to DE and sometimes it is even resistant to new initiatives perceived as conflicting with pedagogical practices. Individuals and community groups from the black and minority sector are expected to link with mainstream development education centres in the regions but there does not appear to be a specific funding scheme for capacity building at this level. This has led to Southern actors delivering intercultural awareness activities in an ad hoc, informal and undefined manner that is difficult to evaluate in a structured educational context.

For the nationally-based global South organisations such as Akidwa and the Africa Centre, project initiatives are driven by funders' guidelines rather than needs identified in practice. For example, work that remotely hints at enhancing advocacy around clearly established global issues such as debt or trade inequality are immediately off-limits in the prevailing funding environment. This shows that advocacy and campaigning activity is not perceived as part of awareness raising objectives when it is not deployed via the structured prism of pedagogical practices. Therefore, there is an urgent need to re-define advocacy and campaigning work in a context that fits and relates to the ethos of development education. With the introduction of pedagogical methodologies such as critical literacy and independent thinking, concepts now centrifugal to DE practice, there is an urgent need to recognise the veiled but growing tension between big NGOs, downstream actors, and the DE epistemic community.

## Conclusion

This article argues that the marginal involvement and the apparent difficulty in enhancing global South participation in DE can be attributed to the highly structured and elitist educational approach that focuses on engendering '[global] Northern global citizenship'. This process demands a level of professional expertise and experience in the host (global North) educational system which presents difficulties for global South actors. The difficulty in negotiating space for Southern actors is compounded by the absence of an underlining theoretical framework that defines the development paradigm by which DE initiatives are conceptualised, and in which other concepts such as advocacy are understood. The situation is further compounded by the lack of a strategic plan to enhance the capacity of minority ethnic actors to engage in meaningful dialogue and the process of knowledge production.

The prevailing funding environment forms another structural barrier hindering greater participation of global South actors in DE. The guidelines of lead funding institutions reflect 'mainstream' perspectives and agendas that drive the direction of funding priorities, limiting by extension the scope of Southern input in DE. Global South community groups have tended to focus on intercultural education because they find it less structured and with more prospects for career opportunities.

Finally, this article makes a case for a redefinition of advocacy and campaign in DE practice, as there appears to be a disparity in global North/South approaches to the concept and its application in motivating action. Funders have frequently shown reluctance in funding certain campaign projects intricately linked to Southern perspectives. Advocacy and campaigning are intrinsic to community development and civil society procedures, which is the organisational framework in which DE should reside.

### **Acknowledgement**

I wish to acknowledge the support of the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) for permitting me to refer to the conference feedback and my experience in compiling the regional report in writing this article. The conference report can be obtained from <http://www.ideaonline.ie>.

## References

- Andreotti, V (2006) 'A post graduate reading of contemporary discourses related to the global dimension in education in England', PhD thesis, University of Nottingham.
- Bourn, D (2003) 'Theory of development education' in *Development Education Journal*, Vol. 10, 1, pp. 3-6.
- Department for International Development (DfID) (2006) 'About DfID', available: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/intheuk>, (accessed 20 September 2008).
- DICE (2008) *Global dimensions: A guide to good practice in development education and intercultural education for teacher educators*, Dublin: DICE project.
- Esteve, G (1992) 'Development' in W Sachs (ed.) *The Development Dictionary: a guide to knowledge as power*, London: Zed Books.
- Foubert, C (1986) *Working in Partnership with the Third World, Development Education: The State of the Art*, Geneva: United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service, pp. 67-76.
- Gyoh, Son (2008) 'Educating Development Educators: Working with global south communities across Ireland', Regional Working Group Report, Dublin: Irish Development Education Association.
- Hicks, D and Townley, C (eds.) (1988) *Teaching World Studies: An introduction to global perspective*, Harlow: Longman.
- Irish Aid Funding Guidelines (2008), Dublin: Irish Aid.
- McCullum, A (1996) 'On the margins: An analysis of theory and practice of development education in the 1990s', unpublished thesis, Open University.
- One World Centre for Northern Ireland (2004) *The Global Dimension in the Black and Minority Ethnic Sector in Northern Ireland*, Belfast: One World Centre.
- Smith, M (2006) 'Negotiating Civil Society, the State and the Market: International Development NGOs and reflexive strategies for Global Citizenship', conference paper, *Contesting Citizenship and Civil Society in a Divided World conference*, International Society for Third-Sector Research, Toronto, available: <http://atlas-conferences.com/c/a/1/1/87.htm>, (accessed 20 September 2008).
- Smith, M (2004) 'Towards a Sociology of Development Education' in Reconfiguring the Sociology of Education, Economic and Social Research Council seminar series, Warwick: University of Warwick.
- Starkey, H (1994) 'Development education and human rights education' in A Osler (ed.) *Development education: global perspectives in the curriculum*, London: Cassel.
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (1992) *Education for development*, New York: UNICEF.

## **MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS OF AFRICA: STILL THE SAME OLD STORY?**

**Michael Mahadeo and Joe McKinney**

### **Introduction**

This article explores the concepts of representation and stereotyping, and examines the role they play in the media information production process. It focuses on common themes and representations of the global South in the media before making suggestions as to what educators can do to address these representations where possible. The idea for the paper came out of frustration at the often patronising and stereotyped images of people and places in the global South. However, it is Africa in particular, which is the focus of our attention, as it was during the Make Poverty History initiative in 2005 with its focus on 'saving' the continent. Much has been written and analysed on the theme of media images and the 'Third World', but it seems that the media are, as David Cromwell and David Edwards claim (2005), 'unable or unwilling to tell the truth about the real causes of the problems facing us' especially the underlying structural causes.

The controversies around media images and themes depicting the way in which the global South is portrayed, have been going on since the mid 1970s (Cohen, 2001, in Manzo, 2006). With the cultural space opening up from the 1960s onwards, around representations of gender, ethnicity and class, amongst others, the stage was set for questioning Third World imagery and its connotations in post-colonial times. The focus was on news reportage and charity with its 'images of helplessness, dependency and suffering...' (Cohen, 2001: 178 cited in Manzo, 2006: 9).

One of the early research groups in the UK to pioneer media content research, and remain prolific in their critique is the Glasgow University Media Group. We agree with their assertion, that 'there is a strong current in contemporary research, which suggests that the media are engaged in the mass production of social ignorance' (Philo, 2002). We have also seen over time, how students react and express themselves about issues involving Africa and other 'Third World' places, and are dismayed at the survival of outmoded stereotypes in spite of being in an information rich environment, where we are supposed to have more informed choices available to us.

### **Representations**

"The concept of representation has come to occupy a new and important place in the study of culture... it is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged by members

of a culture. It does involve the use of language. Of signs and images which stand for or represent things” (Hall, 1997: 15).

One of the main and very influential mediums through which meanings are produced, is the media. As O’Sullivan et al suggest ‘[t]he concept of representation embodies the theme that the media construct meanings about the world - they represent it, and in doing so, help audiences to make sense of it’ (199:71). Branson and Stafford point out the richness of this concept, and how what is represented or re-presented is a construction, with political implications:

“The media give us ways of imagining particular identities and groups which can have material effects on how people experience the world, and how they get understood, or legislated for or perhaps beaten up in the street by others...this is partly because the mass media have the power to re-present, over and over, some identities, some imaginings, and to exclude others, and thereby make them seem unfamiliar or even threatening” (1999: 15).

Basically, the process of information production is pregnant with powerful cultural and ideological assumptions about what is ‘normal’ and ‘acceptable’ and the main centres of information production and dissemination are located in the affluent and powerful ‘Western’ parts of the world. It is also important to realise that what is not re-presented or is excluded can be just as important or more so than that which is included in the meaning process. There is the dominance of certain types of imagery/story angles in all mainstream media, which create and reinforce assumptions, and structures of subjugation and domination; ‘them’ and ‘us’.

### **Stereotyping**

Stereotyping is very important in any discussion of this nature. To paraphrase Branson and Stafford (1999: 125), we assert that the media ‘in the identities and understandings they so powerfully circulate’ offer characterisations of Africa, which sometimes reinforce to audiences a continuing narrative of African underachievement. It is important to remember that stereotypes play an important role in helping us to make sense of the world, and are not necessarily negative or exaggerated portrayals of people and places. We all use characterisations of people and places and belong to groups which can be stereotyped (Branson & Stafford, 1999: 137). However, it is the preponderance of negativity, which is the contentious issue here.

The dominant themes informing the reportage of Africa can be identified as follows:

*African Political and Financial Corruption*

The last few years have seen many broadcasts and news features with a 'what to do about Africa' theme - Africa the perennial problem with a constant focus on the 'democratic deficit' of Africa with reference to dictatorships and/or rigged elections. The question often asked by these broadcasts is 'what we in the West' can do to help bring or encourage democracy in the continent. The fact that many of the failed power structures are derived from Western origin, foisted on the continent at formal independence, is rarely discussed. Also, the fact that significant resources and finances are often siphoned out of the continent by Western elites and corporations, is again rarely part of the African narrative. There is some acknowledgement of the West's responsibility during the colonial period and the Cold War in this process of expropriating African resources, but with the connotation of this practice 'residing in the past' and it now being time 'to move on', as if political habits, structures and cultures, once so entrenched, can be changed so quickly.

*Africa has become Synonymous with Poverty*

There has been an increasing focus on the debt owed by the African continent to the global financial system, but the phrase used in advocacy for debt relief, is that of 'debt forgiveness'. 'Forgiveness' in our view is a patronising term, which masks the complicity of the mainly, Western banks in lending monies for dubious projects and on unrealistic terms, knowing that repayment will be difficult and make Southern economies vulnerable to Western policy influence. This has been well documented by many sources including the Jubilee Debt Campaign (<http://jubileedebt.org.uk/>).

Debt policies are often couched in images conveying the need for 'development' comprising scenes of shantytowns, emaciated children, older people, dry red earth and barren landscapes, 'a dying malnourished child in a corner with outstretched arms...' (Alam, 1994). The fact that Africa is a resource rich continent is not denied, but who benefits from the exploitation of those resources is only partly highlighted. Reports by international development and financial institutions often focus on African 'warlords', corruption and dictators, while underplaying the role played by Transnational Corporations (TNCs), and the Western dominated global economy in undermining the development of African states. This is a distorted reality that development education can help to address by providing a more accurate and truthful portrait of Africa.

*Africa is Convulsed with Tribal Wars*

Another major African stereotype creates an impression of wars on the continent, which are 'just tribal' in nature, and defy explanation. Not much time is spent by way of explaining the underlying causes, which reinforce

perceptions of African hopelessness, and incompetence. Greg Philo (2002) attests to this in researching the media coverage of Rwanda. He argues that journalists - with notable exceptions - see Africa as a country, rather than a continent, '...with many different cultures which have complex political and economic histories'. He writes about Lindsey Hilsum, International Editor of Channel Four News, explaining how, contrary to popular perceptions, Rwanda was a much disciplined society, more akin to Nazi organisation around racist ideology. This gave the Hutu military a good basis to manipulate racist ideas. Many journalists however, could not believe this because of their preconceived ideas about Africa; how can Africans be organised and disciplined enough to carry out a systematic genocide? (Philo, 2002). Yet, this continent has witnessed massive struggles against colonialism, such as that against apartheid in South Africa.

#### *African Stories are Not Positive or Contextualised Enough*

This has been alluded to above, but needs to be highlighted further. Most news stories on Africa provide little or no context or background and very rarely present positive news features (Philo, 2002). We rarely see, for example, representations of collective effort or initiative despite African cultures, especially peasant societies, tending toward a collectivist ethos. There are rarely stories of government programmes, or industry although privatisation initiatives are often positively highlighted. This is in keeping with a neo-liberal agenda in political discourse, the dominant trend in the global economy today. Where there were/are state sectors, they are dismissed as in need of privatisation despite the positive example of state sponsored successes in Tanzania, in early post-colonial times. We rarely see Africans at computers or working at artefacts in urban places, or Africans using complex technology. When there are positive stories around African nature and wildlife genres, it is mostly white and Western people who are providing scientific expertise and Africans who are seen as trackers and logistical personnel. This is especially the case with celebrity driven wildlife programmes; we do not often see scenes or stories of local knowledge or skill at use. This absence or exclusion from the narrative of local representation contributes to biases, distortions, and a tremendous ignorance.

#### **The Consequences of Stereotyping**

So, what does all of this leave us with as dominant stereotypes influence our ideological perceptions of the 'Dark Continent'? We see mainly images of the starving child and disease; no traders except poor ones eking out a living; limited opportunities for education; and, more generally, Africans lacking agency. They are basically bystanders in their own affairs, depending on 'our' beneficence as benign aiding dispensing Westerners. This situation amounts to a continuation of colonial ideologies of the African 'Other'. This

can ‘...work to reinforce a power relation between the West and Africa that, by prioritising aid, masks the gross inequalities that keep a majority of the world’s population in poverty’ (Dodd, 2005: 26 cited in Manzo, 2006: 11). These ‘realities’ are indeed real but it is the selection process in news and information production, which makes for bias in representations. Therefore, a brief analysis of this institutional production process is necessary.

The Glasgow University Media Group has long asserted news as a cultural artefact; as being socially manufactured. Greg Philo, their senior researcher, points out that ‘commercial criteria are now a key consideration for programme makers and this comes down in part to providing what they assume the audiences will want to watch’ (2002). He goes on to point out that programme editors do not really know what audiences want; they assume the audience’s tastes. These are assumed to be ‘...home, leisure and consumer items instead of the broader agenda’ (Philo, 2002). John Langer (1998: 1-5) points out that news is a commodity, in the business of entertainment, with more emphasis of the latter than the factuality of the programmes. Greg Philo, too, has emphasised the commitment to storytelling, which often depends on sentiment and sensation (Philo, 2002).

There are other important institutional factors at work apart from subjective ones like journalistic assumptions and those of editors. These are the ‘ratings game’ whereby media are in a very competitive business and this creates pressure to not ‘bore’ the audience. There is a great fear of the seemingly ‘fickle’ audience and how this affects profit levels. This is despite the fact that, some journalists, like George Alagiah of the BBC and Lindsey Hilsum of Channel Four, have told researchers that contextualising the issue enhances the interest of audiences. In fact, audiences have often complained that they do not understand much of the ‘foreign’ news (Philo, 2002; Branson & Stafford, 1999). Another institutional factor is the deterministic nature of the technologies in use in reportage, which allow for instant relay and reproduction. This feeds into the aforementioned factors and helps to create the need for immediacy and rapidity, without time to go deeper into and contextualise issues (Branson and Stafford, 1999) - a sort of ‘fly by night’ journalism.

### **What Can Educators Do?**

Briefly, here are a few suggestions which have worked with us to varying degrees:

- Distance students from news by having competing criteria to highlight the constructive nature of news; give them a feel of news as a product;
- Emphasise the entertainment aspect of news; the props, the codes, music for scenes, the voice tones, etc;
- Encourage students to rank news stories in order of their

preference, and link to news values criteria. This gives them a view as to how news is valued and how subjective it can be.

There are lots of good resources available around media of the global South, as this has been a rich area for discussion with learners.

## **Conclusion**

We would reiterate that the battle for fair representation of the global South is an old one by now, but is likely to be ongoing for the foreseeable future. This struggle will ebb and flow, with the tide of political struggle and consciousness in society as a whole. However, development educators have a vital role to play in helping to prevent the objectification of people and places, particularly in Africa. The engendering of critical thinking skills within learners and the capacity to discern bias, stereotyping and misrepresentation likely to distort knowledge of the global South is intrinsic to good practice in development education. There is a prevailing need within development education to monitor media representations of the global South and confront bad practice in broadcast and print media where it emerges. Moreover, the all pervading social media affords new opportunities to present more positive, accurate and contextualised coverage of the global South. Development educators can use social media to share resources and perspectives from the global South with learners and create online learning communities. These communities can challenge the 'same old African narrative' that is still perpetuated by sections of the media and create a distorted, damaging picture of African countries.

## References

Alam, S (1994) 'The Visual representation of Developing Countries by Developmental Agencies and the Western Media', Dhaka, unpublished.

Branson, G and Stafford, R (1999) *The Media Student's Book*, 2nd edition, London: Routledge.

Hall, S (ed.) (1997) *Representation: Cultural representations and Signifying Practices*, University of Essex: Open University.

Jubilee Debt Campaign, available: <http://jubileedebt.org.uk/>, (accessed 19 February 2015).

Langer, J (1998) *Tabloid Television*, London: Routledge.

Manzo, K (2006) 'An Extension of Colonialism? Development Education, images and the media', *Development Education Journal*, Vol 12.2, pp. 9-12.

O'Sullivan, T, Dutton, B and Rayner, P (1998) *Studying The Media*, 2nd Edition, London: Hodder Arnold Publications.

Philo, G (2002) 'The Mass Production of Ignorance: News content and audience understanding', *Journal on Media Culture*, Vol. 5.

## FROM DEBT AUDITS TO DEBT JUSTICE: DRAWING LESSONS FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH IN DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION IN IRELAND

Nessa Ní Chasaide

Ireland's new status as a highly indebted country has fundamentally changed the context for development education work in Ireland on economic justice issues. This new context presents a set of challenges and opportunities to the development education organisations working on economic justice. The key challenge is one of maintaining relevance and credibility in Ireland, where people are suffering increased economic hardship, while educating people on the need for economic justice in the global South. The main opportunity presented by this new context is to engage with this moment in Ireland in a way that succeeds in linking learning and action for greater justice at home and in the wider world.

As an organisation primarily focused on the theme of debt injustice in the global South, Ireland's debt crisis presents this challenge and opportunity to Debt and Development Coalition Ireland (DDCI) in a particularly immediate way. This article sets out the steps which DDCI has undertaken to respond to this challenge and opportunity. This is in order to share DDCI's early experience with the development education sector of bridging the gap between local and global learning and action.

### The Case of Debt and Development Coalition Ireland

Researchers and debt justice activists' work on debts of the countries of the global South have for some time highlighted the impending 'first world debt crisis'. This work warned that the mounting debt in the global North would lead to unsustainable debt levels, while also becoming a major cause of economic instability in the global South (Pettifor, 2006). However, mainstream public discourse, especially in the media, did not highlight this concern, not least because the Northern debt crisis had not been forecast by key financial overseers, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Independent Evaluation Unit, IMF, 2011). However, when Ireland became a recipient of European Union (EU)-IMF loans in December 2010, members of the public and the media in Ireland began to actively compare the European debt crisis with experiences of debt crises around the world, such as Argentina and Ecuador, and sought to draw lessons from the global South. Principles of debt justice, long debated within the global debt justice movement, became part of mainstream public debate.

## **Engaging with a New Context**

DDCI engaged with this new context in a range of ways that included producing and sharing analysis drawing lessons from the South. These steps were important in firstly, supporting DDCI to remain credible in a changing context in Ireland, and secondly in enabling DDCI to support a response from those sections of independent civil society in Ireland which did not have a public position on the problem. These steps are outlined below.

## **Learning About the Irish Debt Crisis**

In December 2010, DDCI produced analysis comparing the debt policies applied by lenders in the Eurozone to those being applied in Southern countries (DDCI, 2010). The purpose of this work was two-fold. Firstly, to initiate a process of learning and debate among its members (faith-based, education and development organisations) that had previously only focused their education and campaigning energies on the debt problems of countries of the global South. And secondly, to support learning among other civil society groups, especially within the community sector, who represent the people in Ireland hardest hit by the debt crisis, but who organisationally had not previously worked on debt justice issues.

Through this analysis, DDCI identified three key policy issues that are central to its members' concerns regarding international debt justice, and that mirrored the concerns being raised about the debt problems of Southern countries: the scale of Ireland's debt; the impact of loan policy conditions on Irish society; and the legitimacy, or otherwise, of Ireland's debt. Drawing these analytical comparisons was an important educational process for DDCI members in order to fully recognise the relevance to Ireland of learning from Southern countries' experience of debt crises.

The next section deals briefly with the scale of Ireland's debt and the impact of loan policy conditions on Irish society, and then specifically focuses on the legitimacy question, which is the area of most interest to DDCI as a debt justice organisation. This is because the legitimacy question goes to the heart of issues of international responsibility in relation to the creation of unjust debts both in the global South and North.

## **Mirroring Issues with the Global South**

### *The Scale of the Debt*

The increasing scale of the debts in countries of the global South is a core concern of the international debt justice movement. This is because the outflows of debt repayments continue to represent a massive expenditure for Southern states already facing major budgetary shortfalls. The continued high debt distress levels of Southern states also points to a deeper problem of the multi-faceted nature of economic underdevelopment which is causing

Southern states to continually run up high levels of sovereign and private debt. By 2008, the combined debt of borrowing Southern countries stood at US\$2.85 trillion, up from US\$1.3 trillion in 1990 (Eurodad, 2008). By 2011, Ireland's debt had actually surpassed that of the sovereign debt levels of many Southern countries. The IMF, using conservative measures, estimates that Ireland's debt will reach 115 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) by 2012 (Taft, 2011). By comparison, the average public debt of Caribbean states combined is estimated at 108 per cent of GDP (Hurley, 2010). The comparison between Ireland and the Caribbean region is particularly striking, as Southern nations are currently of most concern to the IMF and United Nations (UN) in terms of their public debt distress levels (Ibid).

#### *Loan Policy Conditions*

The debt justice movement has carried out significant research on the impact of loan policy conditions promoted by the World Bank and IMF in Southern countries. The evidence from countries of the South is stark – that loan policy conditions have contributed to increased poverty and suffering among vulnerable groups, and have weakened the capacity of states to deliver public services for their people. This is due to high levels of privatisation of public services, and the erosion of accountability between governments and citizens due to the dominant influence of external lenders in policy-making processes (DDCI, 2010). The debt justice movement is therefore deeply concerned about the content of loan policy conditions and the way in which they are agreed between lenders and governments.

In December 2010, Ireland signed a Programme of Agreement with the EU-IMF lenders based on a wide set of loan policy conditions including cuts to social welfare, pensions, university grants, jobs in the public sector, among many others (Ibid: 20). Like people living in heavily indebted Southern countries, the Irish public are now facing the challenge of analysing the social and economic impact of the types of policy conditions attached to the Agreement. This includes analysing the processes through which the Irish government and its lenders arrived at an agreement on an economic plan for Ireland.

#### *The Legitimacy of Debt*

By 2011, as a result of massive and sustained campaigning around the world, US\$122 billion of Southern debt was cancelled through multi-lateral agreements (World Bank and IMF, 2011). By agreeing to some debt cancellation, lenders acknowledged that some Southern debt was not payable. However, they did not address the fact that lenders and borrowers had acted irresponsibly, and regularly in a knowingly exploitative manner. The global debt justice movement therefore worked to incorporate the concept of illegitimate debt into the international debt justice debate.

The concept builds on the idea of ‘odious debts’ developed by early 20th century law professor, Alexander Sack. Sack applied the argument to despotic regimes, and to loans that do not serve the people paying for them. Sack proposed four key points relating to odious loan contracts. First, a condition of legality of a loan is that ‘it is employed for the needs and in the interests of the state’. Second, that odious debts fall with an (odious) regime and are not owed by successors. Third, that debts can be considered odious if they are used for personal rather than state purposes, and fourth, that creditors commit a hostile act when they make an odious loan (Hanlon, 2002).

The concept of ‘illegitimate debt’ or ‘unjust debt’ further developed the odious debt argument to apply to situations beyond despotic scenarios. The illegitimate debt concept captures a range of moral problems that have resulted from various types of irresponsible loans. The concept has been formulated drawing upon evidence-based experience of the large variety of recorded circumstances that have created failed loans. This evidence has revealed that these circumstances include: loans given to repressive regimes and/or to known corrupt officials; loans extended for dubious purposes and/or obviously useless projects; loans for damaging or overpriced projects; or those granted on unacceptable terms and conditions (See for example Christian Aid, 2007; Eurodad, 2007; Hanlon, 2002; Mandel 2006). A review of concrete cases of illegitimate debts extended ‘for development purposes’ to Southern countries by the governments of Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Italy, United Kingdom (UK) and United States (US) found that:

“In many cases, these governments lent money to regimes they knew to be corrupt or repressive in order to buy political allegiance, or they were loans designed to help rich country companies do business abroad and development was never their original purpose. In still other cases, loans were provided at exorbitant interest rates. Under the current system, these debts must always be repaid and there is no consideration of whether these loans were responsibly extended by creditors or the funds responsibly used by debtors.... In national law...it is the responsibility of the creditor to exercise ‘due diligence’ when he/she extends a loan to an individual (for example a bank must ensure that the client has a sound business plan or sufficient income with which to repay the loan)” (Eurodad, 2007: 3).

#### *The Case of Ireland and Illegitimate Debt*

It has been acknowledged by the Independent Commission of Investigation into the Banking Sector in Ireland, and the new governor of the Irish Central Bank, among others, that Ireland’s sovereign debts are causing systemic economic instability in Ireland and that a range of actors, including the banks, the Financial Regulator, the Irish Central Bank, and the previous

Irish government, including the Department of Finance, were involved in the irresponsible accumulation of unsustainable bank debt (Commission of Investigation, 2011). The Commission of Investigation also highlights a dangerous international erosion of credit standards, and a herd mentality between financial and public institutions and groupthink within them, reinforced by a widespread international faith in the efficiency of financial markets (Commission of Investigation into the Banking Sector In Ireland, 2011: i). Specifically, the Commission pointed to the lower credit standards adopted in Ireland and internationally and the ‘speculative mania’ in Ireland in the property market where ‘even obvious warning signs went unheeded in the belief that the world had changed and that a stable economy was somehow automatically guaranteed’ (Ibid). The Commission also termed external auditing companies who were responsible for monitoring the accounts of the banks that subsequently required emergency lending assistance, as ‘silent observers’ and public authorities as ‘enablers’ in creating the crisis.

Ireland’s large debt is due to the socialisation of unpayable private debt by Irish banks. This socialisation happened as the Irish government decided to guarantee the deposits and senior bondholder debt of six pillar Irish banks, thus socialising commercial debts, meaning that people in Ireland were made responsible for repaying the bank debt for years to come. The social impact of this debt burden and the impact of the loan policy conditions accompanying international ‘bailout’ loans has been disastrous. Andy Storey argues that:

“The social price being paid is catastrophic, not least because the austerity policies are sending the economy into a tailspin: national income is already down over 15% from its peak level. Unemployment stands at almost 15%, close to half a million people.... Emigration is estimated to be running at 40,000 per annum. The economy is mired in recession, with investment down from over €48 billion in each of 2006 and 2007 to a little over €18 billion in 2010. Bank loan approval rates fell from 95% in 2007 to 55% in 2010.... Meanwhile, Irish banks, despite their newly cautious lending practices, are highly dependent on short-term loans of over €150 billion from the ECB and the Irish Central Bank as bank deposits have fallen steadily. If Ireland were to try and return to the private financial markets, it could probably only borrow at a very high rate of interest” (Storey: 2012).

The decisions that led to the socialisation of private debt, and the social impacts thereof have raised serious questions regarding the justice or legitimacy of Ireland’s debts. From a debt justice perspective, the key question that arises is how responsibilities for dealing with this unjust debt could or should be shared fairly.

*Co-responsibility of Failed Loans?*

In sovereign debt crises, lenders currently function as judge and jury regarding whether a debt can or should be repaid. This is because there is no international legal mechanism to deal with unpayable or illegitimate sovereign debts. Lenders argue that debts should always be repaid without any shared responsibility when they prove difficult to pay or when the loan had a negative social impact. This is because lenders wish to ensure that repayments of debts are prioritised and that the rules of the lending - borrowing system are not undermined. A notable exception to this trend is the government of Norway which cancelled some US\$80 million of debt owed to Norway by five Southern countries as a result of a Norwegian Ship Export Campaign (1976-80). The Norwegian government declared its 'shared responsibility' in creating a 'development policy failure' (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006) and called for the establishment of a United Nations (UN) taskforce on illegitimate debts (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009). This led to deepening discussions at the UN on the problem of illegitimate debt.

As a result, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has initiated a programme called Responsible, Sovereign Lending and Borrowing which includes as a core part of its objectives, the development of guidelines and criteria for assessing the legitimacy of both past and future sovereign debts (UNCTAD, 2009). In December 2011, the UN Annual Resolution indicated that 'creditors and borrowers should share responsibility for the creation of unsustainable debt situations' in Southern countries (UN General Assembly, 17 October 2011). These official views in support of shared responsibilities have given rise to a focus on debt audits in countries of the global South. Debt audits have become important instruments to ascertain the circumstances of loan agreements, the scale of the debt, the content of lending contracts, and the impacts of the use of loans.

**Learning from the Global South**

Debt audits have been carried out by citizens groups in the global South such as in the Philippines. One national, government-led, debt audit has been carried out, by the government of Ecuador, the first government in the global South to establish a national debt audit commission to examine the scale, nature and legitimacy or otherwise of the country's debts contracted between the period 1976-2006 (Comisión Para La Auditoría Integral Del Crédito Público, 2008). Interestingly, the audit examined the scale of Ecuador's debt but also its political nature, such as the social impact of loans to Ecuador during that period. Ricardo Patiño, former Economy and Finance Minister in Ecuador and key backer of the independent audit outlined the audit's intended wide-ranging nature:

“[The audit] will consider all relevant legal, political and economic factors which have led to the accumulation of illegitimate debt in this country. The audit commission must also consider social and environmental damages to the local populations caused by debt. Debts which are found to be illegitimate must not be paid. Debts which are legitimate must be reimbursed”.

The audit report details a litany of lending failures and exploitative loan contracts and after the audit, the Ecuadorian government refused to repay two global bonds worth about US\$30 million, not because of an inability to repay, but because the government believed they were illegitimate and should not be repaid (Ibid; Hurley, 2007).

#### *Education and Action in Ireland*

Inspired by Ecuador's example, Debt and Development Coalition Ireland, Action from Ireland (Afri) and the trade union Unite commissioned an independent financial audit of Ireland's debts as a first step toward enabling people in Ireland to understand the scale and nature of Ireland's national debt (Killian, Garvey and Shaw, 2010). Working with a team of researchers from the University of Limerick, this was the first time that DDCI had worked with local and global justice groups on an Irish economic issue. The purpose of DDCI's involvement was to support the development of the debt audit approach within the context of unjust debt situations, and to support greater transparency in Ireland on the debt question. This would support future action for debt justice in Ireland, which would in turn enable the international debt justice movement to learn lessons from the Irish case.

The findings of the Audit of Irish Debt (addressing the period up to the first quarter of 2011) found that Ireland's debt, including contingent liabilities, had reached a staggering €371.1 billion (Ibid). Andy Storey of Afri highlighted the commissioning groups' political interpretation of the audit project results:

“This [the 371.1 billion] is equivalent to almost 300% of Irish national income. Of this, €279.3 billion (over 75%) is accounted for by the state-covered debts of the Irish banks, and this, as the audit notes, is before taking into account the likelihood that much of the direct government debt of €91.8 billion may itself have arisen from the banking crisis. In other words, the audit proves conclusively that the Irish debt crisis is a crisis of private (subsequently socialised) debt, not public debt – the allegedly ‘bloated’ nature of the Irish public service, or ‘generous’ welfare entitlements, did not cause this crisis. As the audit puts it, ‘it is clear that the bulk of Irish government debt has arisen directly from the banking crisis, the decision in September 2008 to rescue all of the Irish banks’.

He continued:

“Alarming, the audit notes that the headline figure of €371.1 billion may be an underestimate. For example, the audit does not count unguaranteed bonds issued by the banks (and therefore not legally the responsibility of the Irish state) as part of the debt but, to date, the Irish government, presumably at ECB insistence, has been repaying these bonds also. As recently as Wednesday of this week, the government repaid in full a debt (unguaranteed) of \$1 billion (approximately €731 million) owed by a now defunct bank to an unknown creditor, a debt which had been traded on the secondary market for little over half of its value i.e., an anonymous speculator has just made an enormous profit. And the Irish government seems insistent that it will not seek any debt relief despite such relief having been extended to Greece” (Storey, 2011).

#### *Value of the Audit*

The Irish debt audit was valuable for three reasons. It provided clear evidence from independent researchers that the Irish debt crisis was caused by the socialisation of commercial banking debt. Secondly, the audit outlined the various facets of Ireland’s complex sovereign debt. Thirdly, it highlighted that while much of Ireland’s debt is resulting from debt owed to private bondholders, it was not possible to identify who the bondholders are.

#### **Lessons for Development Education Work**

The audit provided a clear evidence based piece of research with which to engage DDICI members and civil society organisations more widely. As a result, DDICI, along with many organisations in its membership worked to form a new network in Ireland of local and global justice groups called Debt Justice Action (DJA). DJA is an unprecedented coalition of organisations – including from community, global justice, faith-based, environmental, academic and trade union perspectives. The grouping also includes committed individuals as members and has embarked on education and campaigning work relating to what DJA view as a particularly immoral facet of Ireland’s debt – that of Anglo Irish Bank/Irish Nationwide Building Society. This now nationalised bank, which is being closed down, lent recklessly to Irish property developers and borrowed recklessly from international banks who if repaid in full will cost people in Ireland at least €47.9 billion (McDonnell, 2012).

In order to reach a stage of public campaigning work, the organisations involved engaged in intensive learning on the Anglo debt issue, by planning technical education sessions with economists and sharing their knowledge with each other – on how Southern countries have dealt with their debt problems and on the ways that communities in Ireland are coping with

the debt. Since the launch of DJA, international debt justice organisations from around Europe and in the global South have also engaged with DJA to learn about Ireland's debt situation, and to take action in solidarity with people in Ireland, including by carrying out solidarity work against the Anglo debt in Argentina, in the UK, Germany and the US.

This formation of DJA has been one of intensive dialogue between its members which has challenged isolated ways of working for the organisations involved. It is a nascent initiative and time will tell if DJA's approach is a sustainable mode of working. However, in a relatively short timeframe, it has demonstrated that sharing lessons from the global South has resulted in important new working relationships between local and global justice groups, and in concrete education and campaigning actions in Ireland. DDCI hopes that this will support increased solidarity among people in Ireland and in the wider world in achieving international debt justice.

## References

Christian Aid (2007) *Enough is Enough, The Debt Repudiation Option*, available: [http://www.eurodad.org/uploadedfiles/whats\\_new/reports/debt%20repudiation%20christian%20aid.pdf](http://www.eurodad.org/uploadedfiles/whats_new/reports/debt%20repudiation%20christian%20aid.pdf) (accessed 22 March 2012).

Campagna per la Reforma della Banca Mondiale (CRBM), *The Duale Peripa Project: Italy's Responsibilities in Ecuador's Illegitimate Debt*, Campagna per la Reforma della Banca Mondiale, August 2009, available: [http://eurodad.org/uploadedfiles/whats\\_new/reports/the%20daule%20peripa%20project\\_crbm.pdf](http://eurodad.org/uploadedfiles/whats_new/reports/the%20daule%20peripa%20project_crbm.pdf) (accessed 22 March 2012).

Commission of Investigation into the Banking Sector in Ireland, 'Misjudging Risk: Causes of the Systemic Banking Crisis in Ireland', March 2011.

Comisión Para La Auditoría Integral Del Crédito Público, 'Informe Final De La Auditoría Integral De La Deuda Ecuatoriana', November 2008.

Debt and Development Coalition Ireland (DDCI) (2010) 'A Global Justice Perspective on the Irish EU-IMF Loans: Lessons from the Wider World', 28 November, available: [http://www.cadtm.org/IMG/pdf/EU\\_IMF\\_Loan\\_\\_28\\_Nov\\_2010-1.pdf](http://www.cadtm.org/IMG/pdf/EU_IMF_Loan__28_Nov_2010-1.pdf) (accessed 22 March 2012).

Debt Justice Action, available: <http://www.notourdebt.ie> (accessed 27 January 2012).

Eurodad (2007) 'Skeletons in the Cupboard: Illegitimate Debt Claims of the G7', Eurodad, March 2007, available: <http://eurodad.org/?p=442> (accessed 22 March 2012).

Eurodad (2008) '14 NGOs write to UN Secretary General on Debt', February 2008, available: <http://eurodad.org/?p=2142> (accessed 22 March 2012).

Hanlon, Joseph (2002) *Defining Illegitimate Debt: Understanding the Issues*, Milton Keynes: Development Policy and Practice Research Group, Faculty of Technology, The Open University.

Hurley, Gail 'Ecuador Launches Historic Debt Audit Commission', July 2007, available: <http://www.eurodad.org/whatsnew/articles.aspx?id=1934&item=1502> (accessed 7 March 2012).

Hurley, Gail (2010) 'Achieving Debt Sustainability and the MDGs in Small Island Developing States', UNDP panel discussion, Economic and Financial Committee Side Event General Assembly of the United Nations, New York, October 2010, available: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/second/65/docs/hurley.pdf> (accessed 22 March 2012).

Independent Evaluation Office of the IMF (2011), *IMF performance in the run up to the financial and economic crisis*, available: [http://www.ieso-imf.org/ieso/files/completedevaluations/Crisis-%20Main%20Report%20\(without%20Moises%20Signature\).pdf](http://www.ieso-imf.org/ieso/files/completedevaluations/Crisis-%20Main%20Report%20(without%20Moises%20Signature).pdf) (accessed 22 March 2012).

Jubilee Debt Campaign (2008) *Unfinished Business: 10 Years of Dropping the Debt*, London: Jubilee Debt Campaign.

Killian, Sheila, Garvey, J and Shaw, F (2010) *An Audit of Irish Debt*, University of Limerick, available: <http://www.debtireland.org/resources/publications/an-audit-of-irish-debt/> (accessed 27 January 2012).

Mandel, Steve (2006) 'Odious Lending: Debt Relief as if Morals Mattered', London: New Economics Foundation.

McDonnell, Tom (2012) 'Frequently asked questions on Anglo Irish Bank Promissory Note', available: <http://www.notourdebt.ie/faq> (accessed 22 March 2012).

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2006) 'Cancellation of debts incurred as a result of the Norwegian Ship Export Campaign (1976-80)'. See <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/Documents/Reports-programmes-of-action-and-plans/Reports/2006/Cancellation-of-debts-incurred-as-a-result-of-the-Norwegian-Ship-Export-Campaign-1976-80.html?id=420457> (accessed 27 January 2012).

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2009) 'Statement at the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development New York'. See [http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/about\\_mfa/Other-political-staff/Hakon-Arald-Gulbrandsen/Speeches-and-articles/2009/crisis\\_impact.html?id=570242](http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/about_mfa/Other-political-staff/Hakon-Arald-Gulbrandsen/Speeches-and-articles/2009/crisis_impact.html?id=570242) (accessed 27 January 2012).

Pettifor, Ann (2006) *The Coming First World Debt Crisis*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Storey, Andy, 'Ireland's Debt Crisis: Roots and Reactions', Paper for presentation at Université d'Automne ATTAC-Suisse Du, 4-6 November 2011, Geneva.

Taft, Michael, 'Government Debt and Domestic Economy', Unpublished, September 2011.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), 'UNCTAD to launch project on responsible sovereign lending and borrowing', 16 March 2009. See <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Page.asp?intItemID=4778&lang=1> (accessed 27 January 2012).

United Nations General Assembly Resolution, 66<sup>th</sup> Session, 2nd Committee, 'Macroeconomic policy questions: external debt sustainability and development', December 2011, available:

<http://www.unctad.info/upload/Debt%20Portal/66GA%20External%20Debt%20Resolution%20-%2030%20Nov%202011.pdf> (accessed 22 March 2012).

World Bank and IMF (2011) *HIPC and MDRI Status Update – Status of Implementation and Proposals for the Future of the HIPC Initiative*, available: <http://www.imf.org/external/np/pp/eng/2011/110811.pdf> (accessed 22 March 2012).

## ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES FOR GENDER AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: VOICES AND VISIONS FROM LATIN AMERICA

Patricia Muñoz Cabrera

### Introduction

Women in Development Europe (WIDE) is a Europe-based network advocating for gender and social justice in trade and development policies in Europe and globally. WIDE's work on feminist alternatives to the neo-liberal economic model dates from the establishment of our network in 1985. More recently, WIDE has engaged in a process of documenting evidence on the role women are playing in the construction of alternatives to the neoliberal economic model at the macro and micro levels which resulted in a series of publications under the title 'Economic Alternatives for Gender Equality and Social Justice'. The first in the series is titled *In search of Economic Alternatives for Gender and social Justice: Voices from India* (Wichterich, 2010) and the second, on which this article is based, is titled *Economic Alternatives for Gender Equality and Social Justice: Voices and Visions from Latin America* (2011: see <http://www.wide-network.org>). The latter showcases in eight case studies the practical experiences of a diverse range of women's organisations in Latin America specifically: Asociación Lola mora (Argentina), Centro de Estudios de la Universidad central de Venezuela (REMTE Y CLACSO), Red Comuincacol (Colombia), Coalición Ecuador Decide/Centro de Estudios e investigaciones Mariátegui (Ecuador), Instituto de formación femenina integral - IFFI (Bolivia), REPEM (México), ADC (Peru), and IGTN (Guatemala).

This article begins with a macro-political analysis of current challenges affecting Latin America in the aftermath of multiple and interconnected crises (food, energy, climate, financial). The second section engages in a discussion on alternatives to neo-liberalism being put forward by feminist and women activists and scholars. The third section maps the alternatives being implemented by women on the ground as documented by the eight case studies. It also draws linkages between experiences from the field and feminist rethinking of the current neoliberal economic model in Latin America.

### Mapping Alternatives in Latin America: Current Challenges

In spite of the evident failure of the current neoliberal model to release Latin America from the legacy of social inequalities informing its economies, the ideology of macroeconomic growth remains as pervasive as it was before the recent crises. Several studies demonstrate that the interlocking crises of the past four years have brought forth a new cycle of disciplinary policies which include improving the monitoring of financial markets (Katz, 2010; Gallagher

2008, 2010) and stabilising national economies through programmes that ensure macroeconomic efficiency, competitiveness and maximisation of profit in the short term. It is hoped that an improvement in the image and credibility of Latin American economies will attract greater flows of direct foreign investment to the region; these are desperately needed to sustain macroeconomic growth (Katz, 2010). One major aspect of the policies adopted by governments is that there has been little or no concern for the social, political and environmental implications of the policy reforms undertaken.

The situation has been worsened by an overemphasis on boosting consumption power and liberalisation of key sectors such as extractive industries and agriculture. The latter has boosted speculation in the commodities market, thereby exacerbating the volatility of prices of basic grains (Wise et al, 2012; GRAIN, 2010). At the systemic level, one can note that the austerity measures are designed to mitigate the financial crisis rather than replace the dominant economic model. This is clearly the case with current anti-cyclical policies, which reflect governments' preoccupation with adjusting to the present crises rather than contemplating that they result from systemic failure.

Like a reflection of the global economic landscape, Latin America is currently affected by what has been called the 'financialisation' of its economies. This refers to the increasing levels of investment which are being directed towards speculation and short-term profit in financial markets (Harvey, 2008). Several analysts have drawn our attention to the fact that financialisation not only transforms the functioning of the economic system at the macro and micro level; it also perpetuates structural inequalities. In this sense, Palley refers to financialisation as 'a process whereby financial markets, financial institutions and financial elites gain greater influence over economic policy and economic outcomes' (2007). Others have criticised what they call a reordering of the economy affecting even so-called progressive governments (particularly in South America). Acosta (2009) contends that in Ecuador the official discourse promotes a sovereign economic model that respects the rights of people and nature, whereas in practice, the government has not moved away from the 'extractivist logic' which is 'predatory' in terms of human rights and the environment. Ruiz (2011) suggests that this trend has also expanded to the rest of the continent when he criticises Colombia's strategy of opening up its mineral resources to foreign direct investment (FDI).

Empirical evidence shows that the neoliberal model has gained momentum in Latin America, and it is precisely in the area of economic, social and cultural rights of millions of women and men workers where its disenfranchising impact is most noticeable. Macroeconomic policies and policymakers continue to ignore the fact that the current economic model is perpetuating social inequalities in a region that ranks among the most unequal in the world. Egan (2003) refers to a 'hegemonic transnational order' which

is exacerbating social polarisation and competition. In this hegemonic order, public and private actors collaborate towards an accumulation of capital which is empowering multinational conglomerates, while foreign investors compete to gain control over sectors such as communications, energy, water, banking services, the extractive mining industry and agriculture (Gallagher, 2010; GRAIN, 2010).

Regrettably, governments continue to overlook the fact that foreign direct investment in agriculture and the mining sector has exacerbated social conflict, dispossession, and varied forms of violence against women. An evidence-based study conducted in Brazil by the World Rain Forest Movement (WRFM) shows that the situation is particularly critical in areas inhabited by indigenous and Afro-descendent men and women:

“These regions have seen the growth of poverty and unemployment; both have exacerbated violence and an exodus from rural areas. In terms of specific impacts on women, an increase in prostitution has been observed in areas where monoculture plantations are most prevalent” (2010).

This study corroborates the need to further expose the correlation of land-grabbing and extractive mining with economic and sexual violence against women. Moreover, the growing wave of violence generated by trends in FDI demands critical analysis of the impact of the current policies and practices of multinational enterprises and international financial institutions (IFIs) and urgent action from governments and multilateral institutions.

### **Building Alternatives in Latin America: Another Economy is Possible**

Building viable alternatives to global capitalism is a long process and not without dilemmas and contradictions. Taking this complexity into account, the alternatives emerging in Latin America cover a wide range of issues which cannot be fully addressed in the limited space devoted to this paper. Generally speaking however, many of the proposals include elements of solidarity economy as alternatives to the neoliberal economic paradigm. One specific alternative that has gained momentum is the paradigm of food sovereignty, proposed by Via Campesina, which movements such as Movimento sem Terra (MST) in Brazil and the Network of Women Transforming Economy (REMTE), among others, have adhered. Another approach has been that of Matthei (2002), the Brazilian Women’s organisation (AMB) and the Mercosur feminist network (AFM), which has recently begun to rethink the current economic and development models from a feminist standpoint that is anti-capitalist, anti-racist and anti-heterosexist (see <http://www.articulacaodemulheres.org.br>).

At a governmental level, no economic models have emerged which can be fully considered alternatives to the current neoliberal capitalist model. However, one should acknowledge the work done by some governments to pass new policies and legislation that see the rights of workers, indigenous and Afro-descendent peoples as central to social and economic policymaking. Such is the case of Venezuela, where the very idea of the nation-state has been redefined. As a result, at the national level, the state has been repositioned as an overarching regulator of economic and financial activity. However, efforts by the Venezuelan government to reshape the national economy occur within a global arena of increased speculation and short-term investment in which the state also participates through its companies (De la Fuente et al, 2008).

Two other countries where paradigmatic changes have taken place are Bolivia and Ecuador. Even though these two governments have not escaped the logic of the extractivist model, the inclusion of nature as a subject entitled to rights – within the paradigm of *Buen Vivir/Vivir Bien* – in the new constitutions represents a significant step towards shifting the social and cultural mindset of the region.

In fact, the *Buen Vivir* paradigm represents a transformation without precedent in more than five centuries of history of the continent. *Buen Vivir* is rooted in indigenous epistemology and bears a strong relation with the emancipatory struggles fought by indigenous peoples since the Spanish conquest. At its core is the struggle against racist, cultural and economic hegemony and the disenfranchisement caused by capitalism-driven colonial power. Concretely, *Buen Vivir* redefines the nation-state as pluri-cultural and pluri-lingual with the primary task of promoting and regulating a social, cultural and economic model driven by equity, human dignity, and social and environmental justice. In this paradigm, the issue of entitlements is a crucial one. This means that not only people but also nature are subjects entitled to rights. From this perspective, nature becomes a global, finite common, which means that we are all responsible for its protection and preservation.

Another important aspect of *Buen Vivir* is that it is dialogic; that is to say, it rejects the false oppositions inherent in capitalism (the economic versus the social; the productive versus the reproductive; the micro versus the macro). *Buen Vivir* is driven by the idea of redistributive justice: equity in the distribution of wealth and resources and equality of conditions, not only of opportunities. Within this paradigm, redistributive justice is fundamental to make labour and production contribute to the economic, social and cultural well-being of human subjects, the full enjoyment of their human rights and the well-being of nature. Just like any other complex paradigm, *Buen Vivir* presents some important challenges: one of them relates to the emphasis on women as reproducers of life. This idea creates controversy if we consider women's historical struggle to have the right to full enjoyment of their sexual and reproductive rights regardless of their roles as procreators.

At the geopolitical level, Buen Vivir is in line with holistic approaches to the interlocking crises affecting our planet. In this sense it echoes the paradigm of degrowth which has gained momentum in Europe. Both paradigms converge into an idea of economics for a finite planet, to put it in Jackson's terms (2010). These economic paradigms regard the environmental, financial and food crises as inextricably linked, and suggest that we are undergoing a systemic crisis which is a symptom of the collapse of a hegemonic worldview that continues to push for a predatory model of economic development as if the current crises had not happened.

Significantly, these two paradigms share a concern with the depletion of global ecosystems due to irresponsible overconsumption of resources and the ensuing generation of waste. They are also contributing to the weaving of transnational knowledges from the distinctive perspective of social movements and women's rights. This confirms the fact that although alternatives to hegemonic models take a long time before yielding concrete results at the macro level, the thinking and acting to transform unequal patterns of production and consumption has already begun.

### **Proposals from a Feminist and Women's Rights Perspective**

The first proposal echoes the ideas articulated in the Buen Vivir and degrowth paradigms. This proposal calls for a radical abandonment of the logics of profit maximisation and capital accumulation imposed by the neoliberal model, summoning us to embrace a new economy, wherein the human activity of production and social reproduction benefits both individual and collective well-being. It is based on values such as respect for nature, dialogue between cultures, and human dignity (Mejías Flores, 2010). As Irene León (2010) explains, the need is to envisage theoretical and political frameworks that redefine the economy on the basis of an idea of sustainability of human life and the planet's resources. This entails transformations in 'the productive matrix, in visions and policies relating to who shapes the economy and how it is put into practice, what and how to produce, what and how to consume; finally, how to reproduce life'.

A second key recommendation is to approach gender as endogenous to macroeconomics and to revamp the solidarity economy paradigm with the distinctive perspective of women's cultural, economic and social rights. In both cases, the gender blindness affecting economic policies and practices has been exposed (Azar et al, 2009; Sanchis, 2004). In both cases, the proposals redefine the spaces in which economics operates, demonstrating how macroeconomic policies interact with institutions and the microeconomic level: households, community, labour markets, the couple (as affected by unequal power relations). This first achievement has been referred to as a two-way relationship or the macro-meso-micro nexus (Azar et al, 2009; van Staeveren, 2010; Elson, 2009).

Third, women's works and activism have also exposed the 'omnipotent patriarchal system' inhering neo-classical economic theory, showing that this power system operates in global, national and local spaces; shapes the mindset of economic decision-makers, international financial institutions and public institutions; defines economic policies and practices at macro and micro level (Carrasco, 1999; León, 2005; Quintela, 2006; Palacios and Guevara, 2011); and makes women workers vulnerable to multiple forms of violence, which, in many cases, take place with impunity (Monárrez Fragoso, 2002; Muñoz Cabrera, 2010).

Fourth, they have demonstrated the primacy of the market over development agendas, exposing the pitfalls of neoliberal capitalism and its disenfranchising impact on the rights of women workers in the labour market. A major argument is that this model perpetuates unequal distribution of wealth and resources, discriminatory access to public goods, and privileges those agents of power who rule over the predominant division of labour (Espino, 2007; Azar et al, 2009).

A fifth gain is the reposition of social reproduction as a fundamental element of macroeconomic theory and in clear rejection of neo-classical economic theory which limits analysis to the productive, monetarist and mercantile aspects (Azar et al, 2009; Farias and Nobre, 2002). The concrete proposal here is two-fold: to reconceptualise labour so as to dismantle the false opposition between the productive and the reproductive and which defines social reproduction as an essentially feminine endeavour; and to rethink the economy in order to ensure an equitable redistribution of productive assets and of the work involved in social reproduction. This proposal echoes that of European feminist economists who have incorporated social reproduction into economic thinking by means of three main parameters of inclusion: recognition, reduction and redistribution of the responsibilities involved in social reproduction (Elson, 2009 & 2010).

Reinterpreting Marxist theory, some feminists have highlighted the importance of equality and social equity in the construction of models that can supersede neoliberal capitalism. In their re-interpretation, solidarity economy is located in sharp contrast to the individualist capitalist economic model (Farias and Nobre, 2002) and promotes economic activity rooted in the culture, knowledge and production patterns of those who produce the goods (Sanchís, 2004).

The call has also been made to work towards deconstructing the fundamental tenets of neoliberal capitalism from a transdisciplinary feminist analysis of the economy; this in order to critically examine the sociological, historical, cultural and political implications of economic policies, in particular, those policies that insist on the cultural myth of the heterosexual nuclear family. It is argued that the global challenges we are facing today are too complex to be fully comprehended by macroeconomic analysis. Hence, the need to assess the

wellbeing of society by incorporating all the human activities that contribute to its pursuit, not only economic activity (Quintela, 2006).

One cannot speak of alternatives to neoliberal capitalism in Latin America without referring to the proposals put forward by indigenous and Afro-descendent women. From their perspective, a fundamental issue is to reshape the cultural mindset in a way that racist ideologies at work in daily life, in public policies and in society as a whole can be dismantled. Another key goal is to transform a consumerist, highly individualistic culture into a culture of care at two levels: care and protection of the human rights of people and the rights of nature (Tauli-Corpuz, 2005; Chancosa, 2010). It is argued that this transformation is an indispensable step towards a new logic of accumulation. In this new logic, women's human rights as individual subjects are understood as complementary with their collective rights as people. For indigenous women in particular, Buen Vivir is especially important for two reasons: first, it has provided them with an opportunity to validate their discredited knowledges; and second, it has permitted them to occupy social and political space locally, nationally and internationally.

Even though much remains to be done, we can argue that feminist analysis has been highly beneficial to women in Latin America. In the first place, it has demonstrated that women have been incorporated into the labour market in conditions of structural subordination. Second, it has shown that because of the patriarchal segmentation of labour markets, women are highly invisible as productive agents and hyper-visible as being primarily responsible for social reproduction and as providers of cheap labour. In extreme cases, and because of their constructed inferiority, they are perceived as expendable subjects, as evidenced in the impunity surrounding violations of the human rights of indigenous, black and lesbian women.

### **Proposals Emerging from the Latin American Experiences**

Echoing many of the proposals discussed in the previous sections, the eight experiences contained in WIDE's publication take us on a journey through alternatives to the neoliberal economic model currently being designed and implemented by grassroots women in alliance with researchers, members of national parliaments, activists and other women and men committed to social justice and gender justice. Their struggle bears witness to the transformative power of women on the ground: the ultimate goal is to construct a society based on the principles of redistributive justice and a life free from the manifold forms of violence generated by the current neoliberal economic model.

The methodological and strategic approaches used by these women reflect their power to transform oppression and discrimination into opportunities for individual and organisational collective empowerment. Undoubtedly, these experiences follow the proposals put forward by feminist academics and activists who have stated that there can be no social justice

or Buen Vivir without gender justice, and that this can only be achieved through equal distribution of wealth, resources and the work involved in social reproduction.

The case studies show varying degrees of criticism, a fact that reflects the complex heterogeneity of the region, the power asymmetries defining economic, political, social and cultural relations, and the different degrees of liberalisation of their economies. Responses to the dominant economic model also vary: some women construct alternatives of economic emancipation from within the model, others adopt hybrid models, and others, such as the Guatemalan experience, propose an alternative that is anti-systemic in that it rejects the current pattern of capital accumulation engrained in the development model implemented by the State.

Altogether, the eight good practice models demonstrate that social, political and economic empowerment continues to be a key issue for grassroots women; along with agency, they pave the way to enforcing legislation so that economic policies and practices do not hamper women's human rights. The key issue is to exert various levels of social, economic and cultural influence so that women can effectively intervene and transform the very structures of local markets and the mindset of those power agents shaping economic policymaking.

Moreover, the case studies offer valuable insights into a vision of development which has been defined from the specificity of women engaged in a daily struggle to transform themselves as well as their environment. For instance, the Guatemalan case study raises two fundamental issues: food sovereignty and the right to water from the perspective of indigenous women, and in conformity with United Nations (UN) and other international protocols and conventions. It highlights the key role of indigenous women farmers in sustainable agriculture, showing their power to negotiate spaces for political, cultural and economic change despite the conditions of structural vulnerability affecting their lives and livelihoods. A striking feature of the Guatemalan experience is women's power for social transformation. Confronted with the threat of agribusiness, land-grabbing and extractive activities of big companies, they respond with development strategies that are sustainable in the short and the long term. We see how elderly rural Mayan women validate their accumulated knowledge of resilient food systems, improve their livelihoods and those of their communities, and contribute to shifting the political and cultural mindset: the good results achieved through agroecology has caught the attention of the local authorities and men producers, who are requesting training from these women in order to improve their techniques of organic agriculture. As agents of political transformation, they have joined forces with others to question local authorities for the alienating development model being imposed upon them and to claim their right to water as a human right.

The Argentinian case study stresses women's crucial role in agricultural markets inspired by food sovereignty and solidarity economy. It tells us that these food markets were originally designed as a strategy for the impoverishment of farmers as part of neo-liberal policies in the 1990s. Today, these markets have improved the livelihoods of thousands of women and men farmers and their families, have revalorised local markets and are contributing to the preservation of healthy consumption patterns.

Importantly, these markets promote women's participation (80 percent of those who are trading during market hours are women) and the production chain is controlled by 'family production units'. Members are organised as non-profitable associations and there are no intermediaries: the relationship between producer and consumer is direct and the prices are fair. This market model also promotes agroecology and protection of the environment. It also strengthens the social fabric of the community; and leaders use their bargaining power in their relations with local authorities. This bargaining often deals with models of local development which are appropriate to the context and culture of those who produce and trade in food markets. To these important gains one should add changes in gender relations among young women, specifically in terms of the sexual division of labour in the household, violence against women, and sexual and reproductive health.

Another gain is an increase in women's participation in mixed organisations working in solidarity economy. However, despite the achievements, important challenges remain. For example, greater involvement from local authorities is needed so that these food markets do not end up as marginal palliatives to a structural problem. Another big challenge is changing the cultural mindset in a sustainable way. The patriarchal myth of the male breadwinner continues to relegate women producers to a secondary economic role or simply to the domestic space. There is also a great imbalance in leadership positions within the organisations, since most of their top leaders are men. Critically aware of these challenges, women are implementing strategies of awareness-raising in order to shift the mindset of their male peers. At the broader level, this struggle reaffirms women's capacity to struggle against patriarchy from within, to assume gender equity as endogenous to solidarity economy and to envision creative options to the capitalist-driven agribusiness which is impoverishing them.

From Ecuador and Mexico the authors present two cases of ecotourism led by indigenous women entrepreneurs. These experiences show different levels of development, and both highlight the significance of solidarity economy in ecotourism businesses led by indigenous women. With Guatemala, these experiences share a vision of economic development based on the accumulated knowledges, culture and values of indigenous women and a strong concern with Buen Vivir. To women, production and biodiversity conservation are inseparable. The case study from Ecuador documents the

case of twenty-two Kichwa women who decided to create a small ecotourism business as an alternative way to economic and cultural empowerment. The women have gradually managed to develop a micro-model of socioeconomic entrepreneurship which has broken their isolation, has made them more assertive, has enabled them to occupy public spaces and generate income for themselves and other community members.

The experience from Mexico is perhaps one of the most effective experiences of ecotourism led by indigenous women entrepreneurs in the region. This business project was born out of the desire of a group of Nahua women to set up an organisation through which they could empower themselves politically, socially and economically; this without losing sight of the necessary dialogue with indigenous cooperatives and the national indigenous movement to which they belong and identify with. Even though the struggle against racism and class discrimination united Nahua men and women farmers, they had problems making their voices heard within indigenous cooperatives and were confronted with the incapacity of male leaders to assume women as capable leaders.

The experience from Colombia documents three examples of women's organisations inspired by a vision of community entrepreneurship that breaks with normative models of micro-entrepreneurship. It explains that the main objective is to enhance the organisational and bargaining power of women miners, women farmers and other women living in conditions of acute social exclusion in urban and rural areas. Many of these women are girls and elderly migrants, factory workers, seasonal workers, indigenous and Afro-descendent women who have survived the violence generated by armed conflict, land dispossession, forced displacement, poverty-led migration and exploitation in labour markets. Through their activities, these women claim their right to produce according to models that do not harm human beings or nature. With this goal in mind, they are struggling to empower themselves, reconstruct the social fabric of their communities, and defend local models of socioeconomic development which can offer an alternative to the growing individualism brought forth by consumerist capitalism.

The Venezuelan experience presents a model of microfinance which seeks to empower women economically, politically and culturally. This model is implemented by Banmujer, a public microfinance bank led by women and inspired by a national project of socialist popular economy. Their goal is to use microfinance as a means to transform the power relations subordinating women and denying their enjoyment of their fundamental rights. The political framework defining this model assumes women as 'subjects entitled to rights' and 'gender equity' as a normative principle in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of financial instruments, development policies and programmes.

The case study clarifies that what distinguishes this microfinance model from the poverty-alleviation programmes implemented by the World Bank and other international organisations; namely the degree of ownership of the activities carried out by women. Women decide the projects they want to submit on the basis of their own priorities and culture of production. The main idea fuelling Banmujer's microfinance model is to help women out of the poverty circle through what they call 'the economy of the small'. This means facilitating financial resources to satisfy individual and collective needs, improve the livelihoods of men and women living in popular areas, energise local development and contribute to equity in women's and men's social and productive power. In short, micro-credit is assumed as a solidarity tool through which social transformation can be achieved at three levels: in women's livelihoods, in the economic sphere and the cultural mindset. To achieve this, Banmujer has developed an intersectional vision of public microfinance which assumes that women's exclusion and poverty are the result of the interaction of gender, class and ethnic discrimination.

The study from Peru presents the struggle for organisational strengthening and leadership of women workers in the informal economy. It highlights the increasing feminisation of poverty in the informal market. The already precarious condition of many women in poor households is worsened by the inconsistent behaviour of local authorities who deliver little, if anything at all. This case study emphasises the transforming power of networking as a means to enhance the political influence of women in the informal economy (agency). It shows how transformative models of advocacy work can be an effective means to convince local authorities of the urgency to enforce the labour rights of these women. The advocacy and lobbying strategy proposed is highly relevant to the realities of women workers on the ground, and it has helped them to enhance their assertiveness and knowledge of issues that are central to their political agenda. Moreover, they have successfully raised awareness among members of parliament (some have even taken their demands to parliament), union workers and political decision-makers. Thanks to their sustained lobbying, their case has become known among the general public.

The Bolivian case study documents the experience of Ricomida, a women-led chain of food distribution set up in 2006 in poor areas of Cochabamba. This income-generating project promotes economic justice for women through three main strategies: gender, interculturalism and political influence. The idea driving this project is solidarity economy, and the goal is to provide an alternative to women who would otherwise be forced into taking poorly paid, high risk temporary jobs. Ricomida promotes individual and collective profit-making, the possibility for women to work near their family, and family and community access to nutritious food. A revolving fund ensures access to credit to improve service delivery and the quality of meals offered to the public. Ricomida offers low-income community members the possibility

of accessing good-quality meals at affordable prices. The feminist organisation that accompanies this initiative follows the model of 'feminist critical economy' whose main features are: eradication of the economic invisibility of women in neoclassical economic thought; conceptual redefinition of labour and deconstruction of the androcentric world vision that locates men as the only subject and agent of economic, social and cultural change; and rejection of the false opposition between production and reproduction. On a broader level, the Ricomida project stresses the importance of urban spaces in transforming patterns of food consumption, especially if one considers the devastating impact of junk food in our eating culture.

In line with our discussion on alternatives, a relevant question at this stage is, what do these case studies offer in terms of proposals for alternative economic and development paradigms in the region and globally? We turn to these proposals in the next section.

### **Transforming from Below: Solidarity Economy from the Perspective of Grassroots Women**

In the first instance, the eight case studies compel us to rethink the economy from the complexity of women's everyday existence. In this sense, they expose the fissures of the capitalist system from below, unveiling the logics of domination at work in local spaces and their interconnection with power structures at the macro level. They also validate the experiential knowledge of women who have been key contributors to socioeconomic development but who nevertheless remain invisible subjects in macroeconomic analysis. At the local level, they document innovative examples of micro-models of solidarity economy which are designed according to women's contextual realities. These models aim to fulfil the practical, productive and strategic needs of women, emphasising the importance of rights-based development models. Moreover, they stress the need to achieve a culture of violence-eradication, in particular the forms of violence against women generated by the neoliberal economic model. In the same way, the experiences highlight the added value of holistic visions of development, suggesting that rooted integral approaches are more appropriate for they take stock of the multidimensional nature of economic development, the power relations affecting economic policies and practices, and the complex heterogeneity of women and men on the ground.

The micro-models highlighted women's leadership in local production, promote hybrid modes of trading goods/produce, and foster socio-productive models that promote cooperativism and production for local markets. These are all strategic options that ensure food security for many households in the region and strengthen the capacity of small-scale producers and entrepreneurs to counteract the multiple crises affecting their livelihoods. These initiatives deserve serious and sustained support from governments and donor agencies.

### **Food Sovereignty from a Grassroots Women's Rights Perspective**

Echoing the critique made by feminist and women activists and scholars, the case studies suggest that it is urgent to rethink the current agricultural model from the lens of food sovereignty. The different development modalities proposed are bound by one important tenet: women's rights to produce and trade in accordance with their own priorities, culture, and contextual realities. A fundamental issue here is that economic activities must be enshrined in an idea of development with dignity and solidarity. To grassroots women, the human rights dimension of economic policies is a key issue, which continues to be overlooked by macroeconomic theory. Consequently, they stress the need to lobby governments so that they comply with commitments made in the framework of women's social, cultural and economic rights (for instance, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women - CEDAW - and Beijing) and with conventions protecting the rights of indigenous and Afro-descendent women as people.

The case studies emphasise the complex heterogeneity of women informing the reality of local development, providing insights into how we can enrich gender analysis by incorporating intersecting variables such as race/ethnicity, social class, age, gender and sexual identity. In this specific sense, the case studies expose the pitfalls of orthodox economic analysis which has failed to engage in analysis of the overlapping hegemonies at work in the neoliberal economic model: class, patriarchal and racial hegemonies collaborate under a common banner. This common banner is profit maximisation at the lowest possible cost regardless of its human consequences. The case studies suggest that these overlapping hegemonies affect women in distinctive ways. For instance, because of their constructed inferiority, black and indigenous women pay a heavy price. Clearly, grassroots women's grounded interpretation of the intersections of power affecting the economy permits a more complex reading of women's trajectories towards empowerment and agency.

From this angle, the case studies suggest that economic analysis and development models that do not include a concern with intersectional gender justice are doomed to be flawed. The major risk would be to privilege women of a specific social group in detriment of others who are less visible or socially constructed as doubly or triply inferior.

### **Decolonising and 'Depatriarchalising' the Nation-State: The Need to Shift the Cultural Mindset of Latin America**

Another proposal emerging from the eight case studies is the fact that participatory processes of economic transformation are also political and cultural. It is not enough to transform the economy; systemic transformation requires deconstructing the dominant mindset. In this sense, the studies reposition the key role of the state as regulator of the economy and as the

one that must ensure the equal distribution of wealth and resources. Parallel to this, they propose to decolonise and depatriarchalise society and the state, meaning to put an end to gender blindness, racism and the heteronormative, patriarchal culture-shaping policymaking. This is an important political project in many countries, and it is women who have led the struggle.

In this respect, they confirm the feminist critique that social and cultural aspects are inextricable from the economic models at work in a given context and that the divide between the social, the economic, the ethical and the ecological is not only ideological but also contributes to allowing human rights abuses by multinational enterprises to go unpunished. One specific proposal here is not to dissociate production and reproduction: they are two humps of the same camel. In line with feminist criticism, it is suggested that policymakers should refrain from assuming women to be altruistic providers of care in public spaces and quintessential providers of care in private ones (Molyneux, 2007). The experiences reject a purely economic approach to the issue of care, stressing the need to include an ethic of caring for people and nature in economic thinking.

### **Towards a New Pattern of Accumulation: An Economy of Buen Vivir**

Overly or tacitly, the case studies situate women's experiences with the economy in a conceptual and value frame that recalls the paradigm of Buen Vivir. The idea of economic development proposed is inseparable from value structures that are beneficial for society as a whole. To borrow from the Venezuelan experience, economics and the economy should be at the service of 'the highest possible sum of happiness for everyone and nature'. In this way, the experiences redefine the economy as a human exercise affected by power relations and where the struggle to acknowledge and respect the limited nature of our planet's resources is central.

Here again, they follow the anti-systemic critique engrained in the degrowth and Buen Vivir paradigms: economic activities, agricultural production, food chains and any business activity involving an effect on nature must be consistent with the idea that nature's resources are finite and that ensuring the well-being of people and nature is the responsibility of men and women (Gudynas, 2011; Ramírez, 2010). The issues raised situate the debate on economic alternatives in the framework of broad and intertwined social aspirations: economic, social, gender and environmental justice.

To governments and international institutions, women recommend working towards the consolidation of a long-term development model. This model must reflect national priorities and break with the logic of agribusiness-led monoculture and unfettered extractivism – both are threatening the daily existence of women, their families, their communities. Some policy recommendations pointing in this direction include a new approach to the

relationship between capital and labour. This involves ensuring that men and women workers are the primary beneficiaries of their work and guarantee their right to invest their surplus in the social well-being of their families and communities. Other recommendations include the following:

- Production and social reproduction are inseparable: policy reforms and cultural change are needed in order to achieve an equal redistribution of the rights and responsibilities associated with social reproduction. The main argument is that only then will progress have been made in terms of equal levels of emancipation for men and women.
- Economic models should be enshrined in a two-fold ethic of care (caring for human life and nature). Models should also be informed by women's accumulated knowledge of sustainable solutions to the current food and climate crises.
- Economic models should enforce the human rights of women workers and reject financial speculation on natural resources. Concrete policy proposals here are: ensure that policies promote production patterns that are based upon local and national development agendas; ensure that economic activity on the ground guarantees the self-sufficiency of women and their communities; ensure that it corrects gender-unjust relations between men and women (mindset shifting); ensure it preserves biodiversity and seeds which are fundamental to the right to adequate food and water of future generations; ensure it protects women's right to develop endogenous models of production and redistribution, and their right to productive assets (land tenure being a crucial asset).

### **Moving On: Challenges Ahead**

Like other alternatives reflecting the complexity of Latin American social reality, those put forward in the eight studies are not free from dilemmas. All experiences raise the issue (without resolving it) of how to value women's contribution to the care economy away from the monetary logic driving the current neoliberal economic model. The cases of Colombia, Peru and Bolivia raise the important question of how to incorporate, with justice and equity, women workers of the informal economy in a labour market that is structurally segmented due to gender and racial prejudice. The experience from Venezuela raises two major questions: can an alternative model of microfinance really exist outside global capitalism? And, how can we negotiate the tension between a state's efforts to empower excluded women and its participation in speculative global financial markets, oil markets in particular?

The case study from Bolivia leaves us with the question of how to

preserve a national culture of healthy food consumption at a time when global food trends tend to homogenise our eating cultures. The Guatemalan experience poses two major questions: why are so many people enduring food insecurity and hunger in countries with sufficient resources? And, how can national governments develop economic models which promote food sovereignty, social justice and the rights of nature in a global context of unfettered trade and financial speculation? Finally, the experiences from Ecuador and Mexico leave us with the question of how resilient innovative micro-models can be when the mainstream tourism industry views environmental protection as unprofitable. The Colombian case study raises the issue of how to construct strategic alliances with trade unions in countries where unionism not only has been demonised but is also affected by a patriarchal bias against women workers, let alone women union leaders.

Throughout the eight experiences, grassroots women insist on the necessity to advance in the construction of holistic models which consider their economic, social, cultural, sexual and reproductive rights. These experiences also raise important challenges to economic analysis in general and feminist economic thinking in particular. A first challenge is to pursue work on interpretative frameworks that bring the experiential knowledges of grassroots women to the forefront of mainstream economic theory. Second, analysis should move beyond gender-based discrimination to include intersectionality. The experiences show that even though gender continues to be a primary vector of oppression, it is not enough to fully explain the complexity of women's subordinated status in economics and the economy.

Clearly the challenges are great but so is women's power to transform social conflict into opportunities for gender and social justice. The experiences show that women are designing and implementing alternatives for sustainable economic development in local spaces and that these deserve serious consideration by national and international policymakers.

**Note:** This article is based on a publication by WIDE+ Network, *Economic Alternatives for Gender Equality and Social Justice: Voices and Visions from Latin America* (2011). The author would like to thank WIDE+ for authorising the publication of an adapted version of the introductory chapter for *Policy and Practice*. The full text can be retrieved from:

<https://wideplusnetwork.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/ec-alt-eng2012thirdenglish.pdf>.

## References

- Acosta, Alberto (2009) 'Los gobiernos progresistas en Suramérica no han puesto en tela de juicio la validez del modelo extractivista', available: <http://www.maippa.org> (accessed February 2012).
- Almeida, Analine (2009) 'Economía Feminista' in *Cadernos Brasil Local: Desenvolvimento e Economia Solidária*, Suplemento Julho.
- Azar et al. (2009) 'Los vínculos entre comercio, género y equidad: Un análisis para seis países de América Latina', LA-IGTN, 10 March 2009. Presentation at a seminar titled 'Mainstreaming Gender in Trade Policy', United Nations, Geneva, 10-11 March 2009.
- Carrasco, Cristina (1999) *Mujeres y Economía: Nuevas perspectivas para viejos problemas*, Icaria, Barcelona: Editora.
- Chancosa, Blanca (2010) 'El Sumak Kawsay desde la visión de mujer', ALAI-América Latina en Movimiento, March 2010, pp. 6-9.
- De la Fuente, Mikel et al. (2008) 'Políticas Económicas y Sociales y Desarrollo Humano Local en América Latina: El caso de Venezuela', *Cuadernos de trabajo de HEGOA*, 44 (March 2008).
- Egan, Daniel (2003) 'Global Capitalism and the Internationalization of the State: Some Lessons from the Defeat of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment'. Paper submitted for the International Conference on The Work of Karl Marx and Challenges for the XXI Century, Havana, May 5-8 2003, available: <http://www.nodo50.org/cubasigloXXI/congreso> (accessed 12 February 2012).
- Elson, Diane (2010) 'Gender and the Economic Crisis in Developing Countries: A Framework for Analysis', *Gender & Development*, 18: 2, July 2010.
- Farias, Nalú and Nobre, Mirian (2002) *Economia Feminista*, São Paulo: SOF.
- Gallagher, Kevin (2010) 'China and the Future of Latin American Industrialization', Issues in Brief, No. 18 (October 2010), available: <http://www.bu.edu/pardee>, (accessed 12 February 2012).
- Gallagher, Kevin, Daniel Chudnovsky and Ocampo, José Antonio (2009), *Rethinking Foreign Investment for Sustainable Development: Lessons from Latin America*, New York: Anthem Press.

GRAIN (2010) 'Acaparamiento de tierras en Argentina: un manual de instrucciones para entregar el territorio', *Contrapelo* 25 de enero del 2010, available: <http://www.grain.org/contrapelo> (accessed 12 February 2012).

Gudynas E and Acosta, A (2011) 'El Buen Vivir o la disolución de la idea del progreso' in M Rojas (ed.) *La medición del progreso y del bienestar*, Mexico: Foro Consultativo Científico y tecnológico.

Harcourt, Wendy (2010) An interview titled 'Strengthening Local Economies through Gender Responsive Budgeting', *Development* 53: 3, pp. 308-312.

Harvey, David (2008) *O neoliberalismo: História e implicações*, São Paulo: Ediciones.

Jackson, Tim (2009) *Prosperity without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet*, Sterling, VA, USA: Earthscan.

Katz, Claudio (2010) 'Comparaciones y explicaciones de la crisis', *Ensayos Críticos*, 5, Bogotá, 2 semestre 2009.

León, Irene (2009) 'Ecuador: la tierra, el sumak kawsay y las mujeres', available: <http://www.cloc-viacampesina.org> (accessed 6 September 2011).

León, Irene (2009) 'Foro Social Mundial: discursos y gestos de diversidad' in Irene León (ed.) *Mujeres en resistencia: experiencias, visiones y propuestas*, ALAI, available: <http://www.alainet.org> (accessed 6 September 2011).

Matthaei, Julie (2002) 'Por que os/as economistas feministas/marxistas/anti-racistas devem ser economistas feministas-marxistas-anti-racistas' in Nalú Farias and Marian Nobre (eds.), *Economía Feminista*, São Paulo: SOF.

Molyneux, Maxine (2007) 'Change and continuity in social protection in Latin America: Mothers at the service of the state?', *Gender and Development Papers*, 1, p. 98, Geneva: UNRISD.

Monárrez, Julia (2002) 'Feminicidio sexual serial en Ciudad Juárez, 1993-2001', *Debate Feminista*, 13.25, 1-15.

Muñoz Cabrera, Patricia (2010) 'Intersecting Inequalities: A Review of Feminist Theories and Debates on Violence against Women and Poverty in Latin America', available <http://www.cawn.org> (accessed December 2011).

Palley, Thomas (2007) 'Financialization: What It Is and Why It Matters', *Levy*

*Economics Institute Working Paper No. 525*, available: <http://papers.ssrn.com> (accessed 12 February 2012).

Quintela, Sandra (2006) *Economía Feminista e Economía Solidária: sinais de outra economia*, Rio de Janeiro: PACS.

Ruiz, Carmelo (2011) 'El nuevo progresismo Latinoamericano y el extractivismo del siglo XXI', available: <http://www.cipamericas.org/es/archives/3913> (accessed 6 February 2011).

Sanchís, Norma (2004) 'Alternativas Económicas feministas' in ALAI, available: <http://www.alainet.org> (accessed 2 October 2012).

Tauli-Corpuz, Victoria (2005) 'Diálogos y rupturas en la cultura de igualdad' in Irene León (ed.), *Mujeres en resistencia: experiencias, visiones y propuestas*, ALAI.

Van Staeveren, Irene (2010) 'From gender as an exogenous or impact variable to gender as an endogenous force in the new economics'. Paper presented at the international conference titled 'The New Economics as mainstream Economics', The Cambridge Trust for New Thinking in Economics, University of Cambridge, 28-29 January 2010, available:

[www.neweconomicthinking.org/downloads/28Jan09\\_Presentations/van%20Staeveren%20\\_paper\\_.pdf](http://www.neweconomicthinking.org/downloads/28Jan09_Presentations/van%20Staeveren%20_paper_.pdf), (accessed 6 February 2011).

Wichterich, Christa/WIDE (2010) 'Introduction' to *In search of Economic Alternatives for Gender and Social Justice: Voices from India*, WIDE, available: <http://www.wide-network.org> (accessed 15 December 2011).

Wise, Timothy and Murphy, Sophia (2012) 'Resolving the Food Crisis: Assessing Global Policy Reforms Since 2007', Global Development And Environmental Institute at Tufts University/Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, available: <http://www.ase.tufts.edu/gdae/Pubs/rp/ResolvingFoodCrisis.pdf> (accessed 6 February 2012).

**SECTION FOUR:**  
**THE POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION**

## ANOTHER COG IN THE ANTI-POLITICS MACHINE? THE ‘DE-CLAWING’ OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Audrey Bryan

“Washing one’s hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral” (Paulo Freire, 1921-1997).

This article is centrally concerned with a number of paradoxes and contradictions that characterise the field of development education (DE) in an era of neo-liberal shaped globalisation. It addresses, in particular, the question of why the development education sector endorses, tacitly or otherwise, the very ideologies and political-economic arrangements that are responsible for producing or exacerbating conditions of poverty and injustice, while simultaneously encouraging people to take action against this poverty and injustice? It asks: What are the implications of retaining a politically detached stance on crucial policy issues that the sector is ideally positioned to respond to? Why does the sector sometimes have surprisingly little to say about key development issues and crises as they are played out in local contexts? What are the consequences for development organisations that do take on divisive ‘local’ issues? What have efforts to ‘mainstream’ development education within formal education meant for the radical underpinnings of the field? What does it mean to ‘do’ development education in an era of financial austerity and insecurity, where people’s lived experiences increasingly clash with their inward expectations and desires for their (now blunted) futures – futures which were, for many, until very recently, imagined in far more positive and hopeful terms? How are government cuts to development education impacting on its practice? Do the long-term educative goals of informing citizens about the underlying structural causes of poverty and injustice inevitably become compromised or obscured within the context of more immediate ‘bread and butter’ tasks like fundraising for development programmes in the global South? How can those whose task it is to educate people about the structural and systemic features of global poverty best align themselves within organisations whose primary function is to fundraise and raise awareness about their projects overseas?

The question of whether development education has been ‘de-clawed’ or stripped of its original radical underpinnings, based on the ideas of such radical thinkers as Paulo Freire, is an uncomfortable one for those of us who identify ourselves as development educators, with our claimed commitment to ambitious goals like social transformation, global justice, and poverty eradication. The question is ‘thorny’, not least because it requires

us to cast the gaze on ourselves, forcing us to ask—as well as respond to—difficult questions about the possible disjuncture between the professed rhetoric, values, and organising principles of development education, and the policies and practices we enact, endorse or contest through our work. As development educators, we are acutely aware of how our everyday actions or inactions, our complicity or contestation of dominant discourses and ideologies, can have very real material consequences. We encourage learners to embrace pedagogies of discomfort which cause them to reflect on their own positionalities within local and global hierarchies (Boler, 1999). Applying the same principles of reflexivity and critical scrutiny to the field itself is a challenging, conflictual, and in some ways dangerous endeavour; yet it is arguably also a very timely exercise because unprecedented political, economic, and environmental crises are forcing us to think and teach about familiar topics in radically different ways. While in many ways, the old questions - whether they be about effects of loan conditionality imposed by international institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), or the social and environmental impact of multinational corporations – remain the right ones, it seems that now, more than ever, they need to be posed in new and different ways.

### **The Anti-Politics Machine**

Concepts such as de-radicalisation and de-politicisation are also already familiar terrain within the broader field of international development. Ferguson's seminal *Anti-politics Machine*, from which the title of this article takes inspiration, explains how the development apparatus, similar to the anti-gravity machine which suspends the effects of gravity in Science Fiction stories, can function as a kind of 'anti-politics machine,' 'suspend[ing] politics from even the most sensitive political operations', while simultaneously strengthening statutory power, all at the flick of a switch (Ferguson, 1994: 256).

Moreover, the co-optation of radical projects and discourses by powerful actors, and the subsequent muting of their transformative potential, is one of the hallmark strategies of neoliberalism. Feminist scholars have demonstrated the ways in which policy commitments to gender equality often 'evaporate' or become heavily 'diluted' as they move through development bureaucracy (Longwe, 1997), such that an essentially political project gets reduced to a technocratic activity to be measured and evaluated in terms of analytic tools, frameworks and mechanisms, thereby restricting rather than amplifying the scope for transformation (Cornwall, Harrison and Whitehead, 2008: 9). The neoliberal emphasis on performance, efficiency and accountability within the development industry is further implicated in a narrowing of development aspirations and a reluctance to tackle some of the more challenging dimensions of global poverty, gender injustice, etc. The preoccupation with impact measurement, for example, has arguably resulted

in a situation whereby tangible and expressible indicators and measures often drive development goals and targets, rather than the indicators being determined by, and following from, the goals themselves (Unterhalter, 2005).

Concrete examples of de-politicisation in action can be found in recent development frameworks such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The disjuncture between the ambitious nature of the third MDG, with focuses on promoting gender equality and empowerment, and the far more limited target of eliminating gender disparities in education, has been the subject of considerable criticism. The Beyond Access project in the UK, for example, has highlighted the problems associated with employing gender parity as a measure of gender equality, pointing out the persistence of gender-based inequalities in societies where universal access and high levels of educational attainment for women already exist.

Indeed, the most powerful players on the international development stage, including the World Bank and the IMF, have become increasingly skilled at appropriating political concepts like gender to present a progressive face while perpetuating the status quo. As Vavrus (2003) suggests, policies and programmes aimed at promoting gender parity and girls' education supported by development institutions like the World Bank tap, albeit superficially, into equity concerns, thereby obfuscating the economic and political crises triggered by the neoliberal policies that these very same institutions devised. As Klees explains, the situation is akin to a 'good cop-bad cop' scenario, with frameworks like the MDGs serving as a:

"compensatory legitimisation' function for states and agencies that are deeply implicated in the perpetuation of global poverty. In order to compensate for the intensification of poverty and inequality associated with detrimental political-economic arrangements, which call into question the legitimacy of the social order ('the bad cop'), key players in the world system of neoliberal globalisation introduce policies like the MDGs, aimed at ameliorating some problematic symptoms and thus restoring legitimacy ('the good cop')" (Klees, 2008).

### **Instrumentalist versus Transformative Learning in Schools**

As development education becomes more formalised in institutional and policy arenas, and concepts like 'global citizenship' have become ubiquitous across a range of ideological camps, some development education scholars and practitioners are becoming increasingly concerned about a possible de-radicalisation of what they see as an essentially political, ethical and transformative project. Within the formal educational sector, for example, some have pointed to an inherent tension between the goal of development education – which seeks to develop active citizens who can respond to pressing global issues – with a more dominant instrumentalist approach

to schooling which views the primary purpose of education as to prepare students for competitive employment in the global marketplace (Andrzejewski and Alessio, 1999). Recent policy proposals to ‘eliminate’ or ‘discontinue’ academic subjects from education programmes within Colleges of Education in the Republic of Ireland and to instil a ‘relentless focus’ on literacy and numeracy within teacher education and in schools, as laid out in the Draft National Plan to Improve Literacy and Numeracy (Department of Education and Skills, 2010), can be seen as part of a broader trend to further entrench this ideology of instrumentalism and performativity that is characteristic of the encroachment of neoliberalism in all spheres of life. The Literacy and Numeracy plan, which argues that the inclusion of subjects and themes like social and life skills, environmental issues, arts and music education has meant that ‘...the time available for the acquisition and consolidation of critical [sic] core skills has been eroded’ (2010: 25), has potentially negative implications for already marginalised subjects like development education.

Fears about the future of development education in schools are amplified within a context of global and national economic crisis. Since the onset of the recession in the Republic of Ireland, public debate about education has become almost exclusively concerned with economic rationalism and the role that education can and should play in national economic recovery. Within this instrumentalist framework, the type of ‘knowledge worth having’ is identified, implicitly or explicitly, as only that which supports employability, competitiveness and ‘our’ international reputation and educational rankings in a context of market-led globalisation. Within post-primary schools in the Republic of Ireland, the exam-driven focus of the curriculum has already been identified as a major obstacle to the meaningful inclusion or in-depth exploration of development issues and global justice themes in schools (Bryan and Bracken, 2011). There is much evidence to suggest that the wider context within which teachers perform their work may constrain their more ambitious aspirations to foster more critical forms of engagement with development themes and issues (Smith, 2004). Those teachers who have a sophisticated understanding of complex development issues are often torn between engaging students critically with complex development issues and ensuring their students produce ‘safe’ and acceptable answers in the context of a competitive national examination system (Bryan and Bracken, 2011).

### **Citizenship Education as a ‘Cinderella’ Subject**

The implementation of Citizenship Education as a discrete academic subject in formal educational settings, while creating a formal space for consideration of development themes and issues, has also arguably contributed to the de-politicisation or ‘de-clawing’ of development education. Citizenship Education is widely perceived by teachers and students as a Cinderella subject, due to the failure to grant it parity of esteem with other academic

subjects (e.g. Bryan & Bracken, 2011; Davies, 2010; Gleeson, 2009; Niens & McIlrath, 2010). Problems also abound with the substantive content of citizenship curricula in schools. A comparative analysis of Citizenship Education textbooks produced in Australia, Canada, and the UK by Davies and Issitt (2005) highlights a disconnect between official rhetoric, which supports a radical conception of Citizenship Education, stressing the need to engage with the challenges and complexities of the current historical moment, and the reality of curriculum resources providing mere surface treatment of these issues, and failing to engage with issues of power. These authors highlight the tendency within these materials to privilege national rather than global issues, to devote limited attention to issues of diversity and to favour cognitive thinking or reflection about personal issues over active involvement in political issues.

David Gillborn has likened Citizenship Education in the UK to a placebo drug - maintaining that it 'gives the appearance of addressing issues like racism and race equality but which, in reality, manifestly fails to tackle the real problem' (2006: 85). Similarly, Bryan (2012) suggests that Citizenship Education in the Republic of Ireland context functions as a kind of 'band-aid' pedagogical response to the problems of global injustice - denying complex political or economic realities in favour of overly-simplistic, easily digestible and 'regurgitable' laundry lists of symptoms of global poverty and the promotion of overly-simplistic, quick fix and ultimately ineffectual solutions to global problems. Consistent with the 'soft' versions of development education being promoted in textbooks, development activism in schools is often characterised by a 'three Fs' approach, which defines development education within narrow parameters of fundraising, fasting and having fun in aid of specific development causes (Bryan and Bracken, 2011).

Some of the available evidence on the 'mainstreaming' of development education in schools points to a less pessimistic analysis than that afforded by looking at its integration within discrete subject areas like Citizenship Education alone. Seán Bracken, Gareth Dart and Stephen Pickering (2011) suggest that while government support for development education in the UK, and the associated mainstreaming process may have resulted in a diminution of more radical development education perspectives articulated in earlier development education policy documents, it has nevertheless facilitated more profound engagement with development issues—both in the context of teacher education and classroom-based practices. They argue that the mainstreaming of development education has indeed provided significant opportunities for all learners to engage with issues of equality, identity, social justice and development. Yet they conclude that in the current climate of market-driven changes in the educational landscape, it is likely that future debates regarding the place of development education in the formal curriculum are more likely to be driven by a concern with

maintaining momentum made through mainstreaming rather than on further radicalisation of current policies or strategies.

The disjuncture between the radical aims and professed rhetoric of development education and its practical implementation has led many to become deeply disillusioned by, and increasingly sceptical of, the agenda behind development education itself. Biccum (2005) argues that official development education efforts constitute part of a broader effort to normalise neoliberal-shaped globalisation and to produce a citizenry which is complicit in, and unquestioning of, a 'new imperialist' agenda. Similarly, Schattle (2008) presents evidence to suggest that some development education programmes implicitly endorse neoliberal free-market ideologies and have been packaged in ways that 'appeal to the political right' (Schattle, 2008: 85), focused as they are on stressing the need to prepare students to compete in the world economy. Leslie Roman (2003) offers an equally sceptical view of the ways in which the discourse of global citizenship has been used by some North American universities to fulfil a nationalistic, as opposed to transnational, democratic agenda.

### **Development Education and Neoliberalism**

David Selby and Fumiyo Kagawa (2011), apply a related set of arguments to the related fields of development education and education for sustainable development as they are being framed in a European policy-making context. More specifically, they examine the impact of what they refer to as the 'global treadmill of neo-liberalism' (so-called 'globalization from above') on these fields (which they refer to as educational expressions of 'globalization from below'). These authors interrogate the failure of mainstream institutions which promote development education to problematise the discourses, ideologies and political-economic arrangements that are responsible for, or complicit in, producing the very conditions that development educators seek to promote deeper understanding of and action against (e.g. poverty and related injustices). Particularly worrying are the ways in which recent development education policy documents produced in Europe appear to be re-defining development education as being centrally concerned with workforce preparation for technocratic competitive efficacy. Selby and Kagawa apply the useful metaphor of the Faustian bargain to explain the mechanisms of dilution and depoliticisation at play within the related fields of development education and education for sustainable development. They suspect 'collusion with the prevailing neo-liberal worldview in return for some, likely ephemeral, purchase on policy' such that original radical values and aspirations are compromised for a place at the policy-making table now, 'whatever the dystopian future prospects afforded by the growth imperative' (2011: 17).

In a more local context, some development educators have regarded the sector's somewhat muted response to the 2008 economic crisis in Ireland as an example of the 'declawing' of DE. Stephen McCloskey (2011), for example, has focused on the failure of the development sector in the Republic of Ireland to intervene in public debate about Ireland's financial collapse and its loss of economic sovereignty, gives further purchase to the metaphor of the Faustian bargain, laid out in Selby and Kagawa's article. McCloskey criticises the development sector's failure to locate its 'Act Now on 2015' campaign to engage public support for, and prevent further cuts to, the aid budget within a broader international political-economic context. He outlines how development campaigners failed to connect fundamental 'dots' between aspects of domestic economic policy which were instrumental in bringing about the financial crisis (e.g. de-regulation, reckless lending practices by banks, etc.) and a dwindling development assistance budget, thereby de-politicising the campaign, at the flick of a switch. Moreover, with notable exceptions, McCloskey points to the virtual absence of a critical voice from the transnational development sector about the likely effects of IMF loan conditionality and related austerity measures 'locally' in the Republic. Ultimately development organisations have undermined their role as the very organisations best placed to educate the public in Ireland about these issues, by virtue of their long history of campaigning against, and working 'on the ground' to ameliorate the effects of conditionality and austerity on people in the global South.

As Cornwall, et al. (2007) point out, the pressure for complicity with bureaucratic norms, or to remain silent on policies to which one might otherwise object is far greater within an economic and employment context characterised by dwindling resources, growing unemployment, increasingly insecure working conditions, recruitment and promotion embargos, etc. The Irish example speaks to broader questions about the relationship between development actors and agencies and those who hold the purse strings. As McCloskey points out, in the Irish context, 'the relationship between the NGO and government sectors goes beyond that of donor and aid partner to, for example, joint missions to multilateral development gatherings which can arguably result in a blurring of roles, policies and agendas' (2011:3 8). McCloskey attributes this reluctance to intervene in the public debate on the EU-IMF 'bailout' to, in part, the funding distribution mechanisms within the development sector, suggesting that 'when the stakes are so high in terms of financial support, policy formation and government access, development organisations may be reluctant to overtly criticise government policy, particularly in areas beyond international development.' (2011: 38).

Thus the adoption of a politically detached stance on the EU-IMF 'deal' by development NGOs may be partly understood as part of a broader strategy not to further compromise an overseas development aid programme

that had already been slashed in successive budgets. While this desire to secure funding and resources for, or to prevent further cuts to, development projects is understandable, the consequences of failing to adopt a more political and critical stance has arguably proven detrimental to the development education project, whose *raison d'être* is to deepen public understanding of local and global injustices and inequalities. McCloskey maintains that NGO detachment from the debate undermined the sector's credibility as a critical voice and represented a derogation of development education's role as an agent of local as well as global development. McCloskey's arguments are reinforced by Andy Storey (2011), who has similarly pointed to the development sector's failure to draw upon its knowledge of similar processes in the global South to inform the debate about the loss of Irish economic sovereignty under the terms of the EU-IMF 'deal'. As Storey suggests, 'if an opportunity for education from the South is being lost here then so also is an opportunity to learn about the South' (2011: 36). The development sector's reluctance to adopt a more critical stance on the EU-IMF 'bailout' reveals a lot about the ways in which professional and economic investments shape what we choose to see, hear, say and how we act in critical moments. It might also be explained in part by our emotional investments in particular ways of seeing the world and 'our' place in it, which prevent us from being able to draw parallels between 'our' experiences of structural adjustment in the West (or in Ireland more specifically) and 'theirs' in the global South. These blind-spots are especially regrettable in light of the current public appetite for understanding the structures that led to the current financial crisis (See Henderson & O'Neill, 2011).

### **The Local-Global Dialectic**

These critical voices illuminate an important contradiction at play within the field of development education in an Irish context as it relates to one of its major organising principles: the local-global dialectic. Effective development education is seen to hinge on educators' capacity to make explicit local-global linkages, whether in terms of highlighting the connection between the global consequences of local everyday choices, actions or behaviours or in terms of highlighting the ways in which international political-economic arrangements and issues are 'appreciably intertwined' with the daily living conditions of people in each respective society (Carr and Thesee, 2008: 177). For example, as Henderson and O'Neill (2011) point out, there is an urgent need to empower people locally to recognise existing global interdependencies, and the ideologies and institutions that have created excessive wealth and persistent poverty, so as to enable them to make sense of their part in altering oppressive structures. Yet, despite its mandate to illuminate the dynamic, interactive relationship between the global and local, the development education sector has sometimes surprisingly little to

say about key development issues and crises as they are played out in local contexts. Even more problematic, perhaps, are the policing mechanisms through which the parameters of the dialectic are restricted, such that the very prospect of development education organisations or actors addressing 'local' issues becomes unthinkable or sanctionable.

Narrowly articulating the remit of development education so as to focus exclusively on the global South is to pass up an important opportunity to educate people 'at home' about global justice issues. Moreover, it reinforces an artificial binary between 'the global' and 'the local', which conceives of the relationship in hierarchical, vertical, and separational terms. This has the unfortunate side effect of re-inscribing a problematic 'them' and 'us' dichotomy, which closes off consideration of the possibility of 'us' being similar to 'them' in any way, of 'our' struggles' being 'their' struggles, and ultimately how the struggle for justice is really about "us all", always' (Andreotti and Dowling, 2004: 611). Furthermore, this policing of the borders of the global and the local fails to allow for the possibility of national policies, practices and events being both shaped by, and in turn influencing, local, national and international forces. By restricting the terms of the local-global dialectic, how can we truly understand the mutually interdependent ways in which the local and the global construct and shape one another? How can we ever seek to 'know' those distant 'others,' with whom our lives are so intimately, yet often invisibly, bound? How can we expect local issues to have a broader impact or to connect to different projects? How can we expect alliances across different places and peoples to be forged? And ultimately, how can we work collectively towards better worlds? (Sheppard et al., 2008).

On the other hand, conceiving of global issues as already and also local ones, and of local issues as already and also global, opens up important spaces for exploring critically and creatively how issues and lives are deeply and irrevocably inter-connected. Bringing local and global manifestations of the same phenomenon into the same analytic frame (such as the case of Shell Oil in the Niger Delta and North Mayo, for example) is to open up real opportunities and issues with which people can relate, and better understand their inter-connectedness with distant 'others'. While not suggesting that these 'local' and 'global' situations are directly comparable or commensurate, drawing linkages between the lived experiences and struggles of 'local' inhabitants whose lives are affected by global forces, whether it be local fishermen or farmers in Erris, or the Ogoni, Urhobo, Ilaje, Ijaw or Itsekiri peoples of Nigeria, also facilitates deeper understandings of the ways in which contestation and action (another central pillar of development education) can work in multiple and context-specific ways (Sheppard, et al., 2008). It is through drawing these kinds of connections and comparisons with diverse local and non-local actors that people will be best placed to understand the complex workings of globalisation, and to 'envision and make different worlds'

(Ibid.). Embracing the elasticity and inseparability of the local-global dialectic is instrumental to the realisation of development education's radical goals because it is within these merged 'glocal' spaces that social actors can come together (both individually and collectively, both virtually and materially) to forge alternative, more equitable futures for 'us all'.

## Conclusion

Henderson and O'Neill (2011) present a useful analysis of some of the most pressing contemporary challenges for the field, as seen from the perspective of development education practitioners working within a development NGO which seeks to support children and communities living 'in the crossfire' of poverty in Africa. They present a case study which raises a number of important questions about what it means to 'do' development education amid funding cuts to the sector and demands from official funders that development education programmes show demonstrable links between overseas aid and poverty reduction. These authors caution against the perception held by some development NGO representatives that development education should be used primarily for the purposes of fundraising and raising awareness of overseas projects, as this 'will call into question the extent to which it can maintain a critical perspective on the structural causes of poverty' (2011: 77). Nevertheless, they feel that development education can and should retain its 'critical edge' while still working within the boundaries of a development NGO. This critical edge, they suggest, can be maintained by stressing historical and contemporary practices of exploitation and oppression perpetrated by the North that adversely affect inhabitants of the global South.

This article has called for the development education sector to reclaim its radical roots, so that it can 're-claw' its way back to doing what it knows best, and what it is positioned to do, better than most. I close with the words of an Australian Aboriginal woman, who responds to those who would offer her 'solidarity' as follows:

"If you have come here to help me  
You are wasting your time...  
But if you have come because  
Your liberation is bound up with mine  
Then let us work together" (Holloway, 2010: 271).

## References

- Andreotti, V and Dowling, E (2004) 'WSF, Ethics and Pedagogy' in *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. 56, 182, pp. 605-613.
- Andrzejewski, J and Alessio, J (1999) 'Educating for global citizenship and social responsibility' in *Progressive Perspectives*, Vol. 1, 2, pp. 2-17.
- Biccum, A (2005) 'Development and the 'new' imperialism: a reinvention of colonial discourse in DFID promotional literature' in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26, 6, pp. 1005-1020.
- Boler, M (1999) *Feeling Power: Emotions and Education*, New York: Routledge.
- Bracken, S, Dart, G and Pickering, S (2011) 'Evolution or revolution? An analysis of the changing faces of development in the United Kingdom' in *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring 2011, pp. 47-65.
- Bryan, A (2012) 'Band-Aid pedagogy, celebrity humanitarianism and cosmopolitan provincialism: a critical analysis of global citizenship education in the Republic of Ireland' in S Malleck and S Wankel (eds.) *Handbook of Research on Ethical Models and Applications of Globalization: Cultural, Socio-Political, and Economic Perspectives*, Hershey: IGI Global.
- Bryan, A and Bracken, M (2011) *Learning to Read the World? Teaching and Learning about Global Citizenship and International Development in Irish Post-Primary Schools*, Limerick: Irish Aid.
- Carr, P and Thesee, G (2008) 'The Quest for Political (il)litteracy: Responding to, and attempting to counter, the neoliberal agenda' in B Porfilio and C Malott (eds.) *The Destructive Path of Neoliberalism: An International Examination of Education*, Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, pp. 173-194.
- Cornwall, A, Harrison, E and Whitehead, A (2008) (eds.) *Gender Myths and Feminist Fables: The struggle for interpretive power in gender and development*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Davies, I (2010) 'England: Searching for citizenship' in A Ried, J Gill and A Sears (eds.) *Globalisation, the nation-state and the citizen: dilemmas and directions for civics and citizenship education*, New York: Routledge, pp. 114-127.
- Davies, I and Issitt, J (2005) 'Reflections on citizenship education in Australia, Canada and England' in *Comparative Education*, Vol. 41, 4, pp. 389-410.
- Department of Education and Skills (2010) 'Better Literacy and Numeracy for Children and Young People: A. Draft National Plan to Improve Literacy and Numeracy in Schools', Dublin: Department of Education and Skills.

Ferguson, J (1994) 'The anti-politics machine: 'Development,' Depoliticization and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho', Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Gillborn, D (2006) 'Citizenship education as placebo: 'standards', institutional racism and education policy' in *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, Vol. 1, 1, pp. 83-104.

Gleeson, J (2009) 'The influence of school and policy contexts on the implementation of CSPE' in G Jeffers and U O'Connor (eds.) *Education for citizenship and diversity in Irish contexts*, Dublin: IPA, Dublin, pp. 74-95.

Henderson, H and O'Neill, G (2011) 'Challenges to practising development education within the context of International Non-Government Organisations (INGOs)' in *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring 2011, pp. 66-79.

Holloway, J (2010) *Crack Capitalism*, London: Pluto.

Klees, S (2008) 'Reflections on theory, method, and practice in comparative and international education' in *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 52, 3, pp. 301-328.

Longwe, S (1997) 'The evaporation of gender policies in the patriarchal cooking pot' in *Development in Practice*, Vol. 7, 2, pp. 148-156.

McCloskey, S (2011) 'Rising to the challenge: Development education, NGOs and the urgent need for social change' in *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring 2011, pp. 32-46.

Niens, U and McIllrath, L (2010) 'Understandings of citizenship education in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland: Public discourses among stakeholders in the public and private sectors' in *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, Vol. 5, 1, pp. 73-87.

Roman, L (2003) 'Education and the contested meanings of "global citizenship"' in *Journal of Educational Change*, Vol. 4, 3, pp. 269-293.

Schattle, H (2008) 'Education for global citizenship: Illustrations of ideological pluralism and adaptation' in *Journal of Political Ideologies*, Vol. 13, 1, pp. 73-94.

Selby, D and Kagawa, F (2011) 'Development education and education for sustainable development: Are they striking a Faustian bargain?' in *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring 2011, pp. 15-31.

Sheppard, E, Porter, P, Faust, D and Nagar, R (2009) *A World of Difference: Encountering and Contesting Development*, New York: Guildford Press.

Unterhalter, E (2005) 'Mobilization, Meanings and Measures: Reflections on girls' education' in *Development*, Vol. 48, 1, pp. 110-114.

Vavrus, F (2003) *Desire and Decline: Schooling amid crisis in Tanzania*, New York: Peter Lang.

## THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM: TOWARDS A DISCOURSE ON DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND CORPORATE POWER

Andy Egan

### Introduction - The world in which we live

Global corporations have a big influence on the daily lives of the seven billion people that live on our planet. Whether it is what we eat and drink, or even whether we can eat and drink, what we wear, what we watch on television, what music we listen to, what we learn at school, college or university, how we travel, what type of work we do, our health, our finances, the public services we have access to, and the type of environment we live in. The influence of global corporations compares to or even exceeds that of national governments; and global corporations and national governments are often working closely together to shape the lives we lead and the world in which we live (Bakan, 2005). Recent research has revealed that 147 global corporations, 75 percent of whom are financial corporations, form a core tightly-knit 'super-entity' that exerts disproportionate control over the global economy (Vitali, Glattfelder and Battiston, 2011).

Global corporations have been the driving force of neoliberal economic globalisation and are very much the face of capitalism in the global South (Keet, 2010). Makwana has described how these economic policies and practices have determined the reproduction of poverty and injustice and the growing inequalities between rich and poor across the world (Makwana, 2006a). While small elites have undoubtedly benefitted – the growth in the number of millionaires and billionaires in Asia has been trumpeted by *Business Week* and *Fortune* magazines as evidence of the success of corporate globalisation – many communities have been fighting sometimes life and death battles to prevent the destructive impact of global corporations on their lives and their environment (Korten, 2001). Inequalities of wealth and income are now greater than at any time in recent human history (Ortiz and Cummins, 2011), and we are living in an era of the fastest mass extinction of species and destruction of biodiversity in Earth's recent history (WWF International, 2006).

As the power of global corporations has increased over the past 40 years, so the power of governments and ordinary citizens to determine or influence policies in areas such as trade or the environment has diminished (Allen, 2007; Beder, 2008; Schwab, 2008). External dependency has been an enduring feature of many economies in the global South, particularly in post-independent African nations. Their governments are often more accountable to global corporations, international financial institutions (IFIs) and even development NGOs than their own people. In Mozambique, for example, foreign sources contribute half of the national budget (Quartapelle,

2011). Indeed, we can now see this to be a growing phenomenon in Western countries, like Greece and Ireland, particularly in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis (Douzinas, 2010; Kirby, 2012).

This dependency is a consequence of neoliberal policies - promoted by think tanks and lobbyists funded by global corporations - including deregulation of financial transactions, privatisation of public assets and utilities, cutting public expenditure and reducing corporate taxation (Cerny, 2008; Plehwe and Walpen, 2007). The hegemony of neoliberalism has resulted in Western governments having little option but to bail out failing financial corporations - such as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in the United States (US) and the Royal Bank of Scotland in the United Kingdom UK - for fear of the entire capitalist system collapsing (Kiersey, 2011). People worldwide are being asked to pay the cost through increased taxes and prices for food and other essentials, job losses and pay and pension cuts. This has led to mass protests in countries across the world. A spike in food prices was a contributory factor in the uprisings in the Arab world which have toppled the governments in Tunisia and Egypt (Zurayk, 2011). These uprisings together with protests in Spain and Greece inspired the Occupy movement against corporate greed and the inequities of capitalism, which is now active in more than 1,500 cities across the world (Occupy Together, 2011). Whether this global wave of citizen protest, and its leaderless, horizontal and non-violent ethos, will lead to meaningful change is a critical debate for the DE sector to engage with, as Jacobs states:

“The uprisings in Egypt and everywhere remind us that direct action is an important pillar for the poor and the oppressed all over the world. Direct action needs to be combined with a radical emancipatory politics to free humanity and mother earth. Otherwise, this whole thing becomes an exercise in impacting the media, and then we go away and the corporations and the state continue to run the show” (*Pambazuka News*, issue 567).

This article is based upon research with DE organisations in the UK, which sought to identify how the phenomenon of the growth of corporate power features within both DE discourse and practice. Given the increasing dominance of private corporations over the global economy, national and international policy frameworks and the lives of citizens across the world, one might expect that the role of global corporations in relation to democracy, citizenship and human and planetary wellbeing would be a central issue for DE. The findings from my research suggest, however, that corporate power is a peripheral issue for DE in the UK.

## Development Education and Corporate Power

DE as a concept was inspired by the desire to create a relationship with the global South based on more than just aid, recognising the need for social justice, self-determination and the importance of solidarity. The key aims of DE include 'increasing understanding of the global economic, social and political environmental forces which shape our lives' and 'working to achieve a more just and sustainable world in which power and resources are equitably shared' (Lancashire Global Education Centre, n.d.). The pedagogy of DE has been largely influenced by the popular educationalist Paulo Freire. Bourn defines this pedagogy as: 'recognising dominant and subordinate cultures and consequent influence on power and ideology; questioning dominant myths and ideas to go beneath the surface and look at root causes and social contexts' (Bourn, 2011).

It would seem inconsistent therefore that, based on my research, there is an absence of literature that explicitly considers the issue of corporate power within DE, and only a relatively small body of work that addresses the issue indirectly through discussion of the economy, neoliberalism, globalisation and questions regarding the radical or conformist nature of current DE practice. To take one recent example, even when Selby and Kagawa point out that current DE discourse fails to give explicit attention to issues of economic growth, neoliberal globalisation and consumerism 'when so clearly complicit in deepening poverty and injustice and harming the environment', they do not include the role of global corporations in promoting these policies and structures that enable them to drive and accrue ever increasing profits and power from this global growth machine (Selby and Kagawa, 2011: 25). This indicates an analytical deficit, which Bryan suggests has been accompanied by a depoliticisation of DE practice through its mainstreaming into school curricula (Bryan, 2011). It is pertinent therefore to consider whether DE can still be effective without raising awareness of the underlying structural causes of poverty, inequality and injustice.

The DE sector has generally welcomed the inclusion of global citizenship within school curricula. We need however to consider whether the orientation of subjects like citizenship has limited learning to identifying what opportunities exist for young people to act as citizens without also critically analysing how that democratic space has shrunk over recent decades as the power of global corporations has grown. Schattle contrasts school based global citizenship which has been largely individualistic – seeking to cultivate informed and ethical citizens – with collective notions calling for the development of institutions and processes of global governance that would establish a collective model of global citizenship and stewardship for governments and corporations (Schattle, 2008). We need to question the relevance of the concept of citizenship promoted by DE to rapidly changing economic and technological contexts and in enabling people to understand, question and engage with the diverse new

forms of social movements for global justice. Is a focus on personal issues rather than active involvement in political issues resulting in a failure to engage young people in a meaningful way with issues of power? Should DE therefore be seeking to give greater attention to making explicit that the 'prerequisite for global citizenship is knowledge...knowledge about the uses and misuses of power' (Harford College Centre for Peace and Global Citizenship, quoted in Schattle, 2008: 76).

We can further contemplate whether the various redefinitions of DE in the formal sector as a 'global dimension' or 'global citizenship' have resulted in a mollification of the more radical roots of DE. Andreotti described the form of global citizenship being promoted in schools as 'soft' rather than 'critical' (Andreotti, 2006). The official guidance in England on the eight global dimension concepts – including interdependence, globalisation, human rights, social justice and sustainable development – makes no mention of the role of global corporations (DfES, 2005). The obfuscation of the issue of power through the use of euphemistic terms such as 'interdependence' may have limited the scope of DE in practice. This 'softening' of DE and a consequent disjuncture between education and action is viewed by Cameron and Fairbrass (2004) as partly due to a political agenda by government. They argue that the Department for International Development (DfID) – despite providing statutory funding for DE work – has played a pivotal role in narrowing the space for more radical approaches to DE by channelling its funding to awareness raising activities and proscribing 'initiatives which involve direct lobbying of the UK government or of international organisations of which the UK is a member, or which involve lobbying for or against activities of particular companies individuals or institutions' (DfID, 2000: 3, quoted in Cameron and Fairbrass, 2004).

Neoliberal globalisation has had a huge impact on education and Bryan expresses concerns that DE has been co-opted into the normalisation of neoliberalism by tacitly accepting the brief to prepare young people to compete and consume in the global economy, and to view development aid as a virtuous moral endeavour rather an integral element of neoliberal globalisation (Bryan, 2011). Is DE, as Bryan argues, accepting rather than questioning 'the ideologies and institutions that have created excessive wealth and persistent poverty' (Bryan, 2011: 9)? Is it equally the case that DE is not enabling young people to develop 'the skills and capacities for resistance and transgression' (Selby and Kagawa, 2011: 20)? Some believe so, with Ellis advocating that education 'should raise awareness of exploitation, corporate power, the state-consumer-media-military construction of desirers, identities, values, and the place of global citizenship' (Ellis, 2010: 6). Such concerns are reinforced by a recent Think Global publication 'Cultivating a global outlook for a global economy', in which any consideration of the ways in which the current global economy generates inequality, injustice and unsustainable

consumption is strikingly absent. Instead the report concludes that 'all young people should have access to high quality global learning to promote social mobility and ensure the UK economy remains competitive' (Think Global, 2011). Think Global appears to be accepting a neoliberal globalisation agenda for the early twenty-first century and is promoting 'global learning' as a pedagogical tool for reproduction, preparing young people with the global skills required by the corporate sector, rather than transformation.

Postcolonial theory has perhaps had the greatest impact on reaffirming the centrality of critical thinking and dialogue within current DE discourse and practice through the writings of Andreotti and development of methodologies such as open spaces for dialogue and enquiry (OSDE). Advocacy of critical literacy is also evident in the adoption of initiatives such as Philosophy for Children by a number of DEC's including Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC) and Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY). While postcolonial theory emphasises unequal access to power and resources, and the reproduction of this inequality through education (including global citizenship education), Lazarus (2011) observes that the discourse has tended to be framed in cultural and social rather than economic and political terms. It has perhaps also fallen into an artificial North-South binary that does not correlate to the reality of global economic structures and institutions (Bryan, 2011).

While postcolonial theory provides an essential framework in terms of understanding the continuing legacy of colonialism and its reproduction through present day globalisation, it can be argued that it does not adequately capture either the supra-national characteristics and operations of global corporations, the impact of migration on societies in the global North, and the impact of neoliberal globalisation on both the global North and global South. This deficit can preclude people seeing the struggle for justice being both local as well as global, and understanding that the fermenters of injustice both North and South are one and the same. McCloskey highlights the importance of DE engaging with local as well as global issues, citing the example of the European Union/International Monetary Fund (EU/IMF) loan to Ireland: 'development educators need to be more proactively and overtly political in their operations' (McCloskey, 2011: 41).

The predominant discourse in DE has been located within the 'development' narrative. DE's gaze on the global South has therefore tended to focus on the symptoms of unequal power and resource distribution in terms of the negative human and environmental impacts. DE has to some extent been co-opted into the development aid paradigm and not engaged with and reflected through practice the voices from the global South who see both 'development' and 'aid' as externally imposed concepts and part of imperialist strategies to sustain continued subjugation and impoverishment (Tandon, 2012). Manji views 'development' as a fraud promulgated by

Western powers and well meaning but misguided NGOs that serves to legitimise the continued exploitation of Africa to provide the necessary raw materials for globalisation (Manji, 2002). Perhaps the historical relationship between DE and development NGOs discourages DEC's from shining a critical light on the 'role NGOs have played in expanding and consolidating neo-liberal hegemony in the global context' (Ibid: 13). DEC's have perhaps been overwhelmed by the dominant culture of development NGO-fuelled and celebrity-adorned charity and paternalism. A combination of these factors most likely explains why DE has struggled to popularise a culture of solidarity as a more just and equitable basis for engagement of young people in the UK with their counterparts in the global South.

Ní Chasaide proposes that the challenge for practitioners is to reassert DE's principles of joining learning with action for global justice (Ní Chasaide, 2011). Two key questions arise from this. How can DE provide open learning spaces to consider and develop critical understanding of the relationship between corporate power and global justice? And how can DE develop processes that link critical understanding of corporate power to collective action as citizens to engage with and challenge global corporations identified as contributing to global injustice, inequality and poverty? DE can also play an important role in enabling people to explore more just and sustainable alternatives to the neoliberal capitalist growth model.

DEC's and campaigning NGOs, like Friends of the Earth and the World Development Movement (WDM), share the aim of helping to create a more just and sustainable world. Yet there are few examples of collaboration in recent years and there appears to be a growing disconnect between learning and activism for global justice as a result. Gyoh argues that the increasing professionalisation and specialisation of both sectors may be one of the factors at play (Gyoh, 2011). DEC's have become more focussed on formal education delivering in-service training (INSET) for teachers and curriculum based learning for students. Campaigning NGOs that employ staff have become increasingly focussed on research, policy analysis and lobbying of politicians, governments and corporations. They often devise pre-determined campaigns (based on their research and analysis) with prescribed ways of how people can engage in advocacy by, for example, signing letters and petitions to their Member of Parliament (MP), member of the European Parliament (MEP), government ministers or Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of corporations. It is easy to see how the mainstreaming of DE and the professionalisation of campaigning has had the (unintended) result of reducing interaction. The two sectors have also become increasingly focussed on different constituencies with DE concentrating on work with young people in schools, and campaigning NGOs largely concentrating on running campaigns and mobilising adults. The result is that 'the relationship between DE and NGO work around knowledge-based advocacy has remained

underutilised in building a constituency of active global civil society' (Ibid: 93).

Within campaigning NGOs there is recognition, shared by some within the development NGO sector, that some of their methods have limited their role in educating and mobilising new activists for global justice (Darnton and Kirk, 2011). The need to reach out and build movements as well as running campaigns is acknowledged. Within DE, voices are being raised that the concern with promoting awareness of international efforts to address global poverty such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – which address the symptoms rather than the root causes of global poverty – has taken precedence over the need to engage learners in critical analysis and reflection on existing development paradigms (Gyoh, 2011).

One of the conceptual challenges for DE practitioners is facilitating critical understanding of the increasing complexity of the economic system and the practices of global corporations; an essential task if DE is, for example, going to 'critically examine the conditionality imposed by financial institutions in accelerating the pace of privatisation, and focus on institutional capacity building and provisions that would compel multinationals to act responsibly' (Ibid: 91). The recent ActionAid campaign on tax avoidance highlights the complexity of the operations of global corporations such as: use of tax havens, subsidiary royalty payments, subsidiary management service fees and offsetting interest payments (ActionAid, 2011). With this excellent source material it would be interesting to explore why ActionAid's own education section has not produced any educational resources about this issue or more generally on corporate power.

Within larger development NGOs there has been a degree of incorporation - induced by increased funding - into the government's development agenda, and a shift towards working in partnership with the corporate sector (Lownsborough, 2009; Rugendyke and Hearfield, 2011). It is likely that DfID's promotion of the role of the private sector in development will accelerate these processes (DfID, 2011). Development NGO relationships with citizens has become more transactional as they seek to sustain funding levels for their international aid programmes (Darnton and Kirk, 2011). Even their more limited campaigning work (since Make Poverty History in 2005) has usually been tied to encouraging the public to donate money. ActionAid is the one of the few large development NGO that has continued to invest in new high profile campaigns to highlight the role of global corporations in exacerbating global poverty. The smaller campaigning NGOs that focus on transformation, such as War on Want, WDM, People and Planet and the Jubilee Debt Campaign, view the preoccupation with development aid as weakening the global justice movement in terms of both creating a new generation of activists and in pressing for fundamental institutional change.

The contraction of statutory funding for both DEC and NGOs may serve as a further disincentive for collaboration, compounded by a narrower

DfID focus on DE in schools (DfID 2011; NCVO, 2011). With many DEC and NGOs losing staff and cutting services as a result of the economic downturn and reduced support for DE, the need to find alternative sources of funding or different ways of working has become more urgent. However, this challenge could also present an opportunity for DECs and campaigning NGOs to work together to create 'dynamic spaces for envisioning common political goals and collaborative approaches to achieving them' (Ní Chasaide, 2009: 33).

### **Review of Current DE practice on Corporate Power**

The primary research I conducted on this issue in the UK consisted of online questionnaires sent to all recognised Development Education Centres (DECs) and other key DE and global learning organisations – assessing inclusion of corporate power themes within their educational activities, identifying educational resources produced and gauging the impacts of their activities. I also included in the survey 18 selected NGO campaigning organisations specialising in action on corporate power with a view to identifying educational resources produced, evidence of collaboration with DECs and the impacts of their activities (Egan, 2011). The DEC and NGO response rates were 70 percent and 56 percent respectively. This was followed by semi-structured interviews conducted with staff from two DECs and two NGOs to obtain perspectives on: the relative importance of corporate power as an issue for DE and potential constraints; suggestions for the attributes that young people need to develop in relation to the role of global corporations in society; ideas for DE activity on corporate power; and views on the potential for greater DE and NGO collaboration in this area.

While the literature is silent, there is evidence of some DE practice on corporate power. Exactly half of the DEC respondents indicated that they have done some educational work on issues of global corporations and power (Egan, 2011). Responses suggested, however, that activity has decreased in recent years. Furthermore, only 19 percent of DECs have produced educational resources relating to corporate power, with more having run training courses or workshops (39 percent) or produced lesson plans (23 percent). In contrast, 70 percent of NGO respondents have produced educational resources on corporate power and 60 percent have delivered training courses or workshops. While more DECs use the term 'corporate power' rather than 'corporate responsibility' or 'corporate accountability' to refer to the role of global corporations in society, nearly 30 percent of DECs use no term at all, reflecting its absence from their agenda, with one respondent stating 'we haven't thought about it – hence no term' (DEC30).

A small number of DECs have implemented specific projects on themes of business, commerce, the economy and globalisation. The most notable was Norwich Education and Action for Development (NEAD)'s

'Just Business' project funded by DfID and The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation until 2004 (Just Business, <http://www.jusbiz.org/>). Powys Environment and Development Education Centre (PEDEC)'s business links project, 'Trade Without Tragedy', which was funded by DfID from 2004-2007 and aimed to help businesses and trade unions understand the impacts that 'every business deal or operation' has on 'the lives of people in far off places and... upon the ecology of our fragile planet' (PEDEC, <http://www.pedec.org.uk/commercial/>). Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC) has produced a number of resources including 'Xchanging the World' (1997) and 'Cost of Coffee' (2005) and contributed to a resource pack published by Baby Milk Action, 'Seeing Through the Spin' (2001) (RISC resources, [http://www.risc.org.uk/education/risc\\_publications.php](http://www.risc.org.uk/education/risc_publications.php)). An EU funded partnership including Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC) has produced the 'P2P (Poverty to Prosperity) Challenge Packs', with the 'Climate Change and Economy' pack including content on the role and impact of global corporations with a case study on Apple Inc. featuring the 'Journey of an iPad' (P2P: Climate Change and Economy, <http://poverty2prosperity.eu/packs>). The degree to which issues of corporate power are considered in these resources varies, and there is a tendency in most of the food themed resources to promote fair trade as the primary solution to exploitation.

A number of constraints were identified by DEC's to undertaking activity on issues of corporate power. A key one is a perceived lack of capacity and expertise with the following response from one DEC typical of many:

"Difficult to keep properly up to date with corporate issues and factual information to make sure the activities are right. This is costly in staff time, and means that these activities become simplified" (DEC11).

Several DEC's explained that issues of corporate power were not a priority in their work: 'As a small organisation we are largely driven by what schools want and they don't come up with this' (DEC9). Politics was identified as a constraint from two different perspectives. One is that issues of corporate power are regarded as too political or controversial by schools, the main clients of DEC services. The other is that many DEC's are themselves politically conservative as illustrated by the following comment: 'The DE sector is so conservative; reluctant to challenge power with a few honourable exceptions' (DEC5). The fear factor was raised by some respondents as a related inhibiting factor based on the past record of some corporations in making complaints, issuing threats or taking legal action against any criticism of their activities.

Access to funding was identified by a number of DEC's as a constraint: 'Issues to do with corporate power are not popular with funders however we do think it is of increasing importance in today's society' (DEC28). Despite

the various constraints identified there was a unanimous response from both DEC and NGO respondents that issues of corporate power should be given more priority in DE:

“The current economy is unsustainable and corporate power is a big part of the problem. If we don’t curb some of what is happening we will be leaving a bad future for the children we are currently asking to be good global citizens” (DEC7).

“The world cannot be properly understood without understanding the central part that corporate power plays” (NGO5).

“If the main aim of development education is to work towards a fairer and more sustainable world it is imperative that issues of corporate power be explored, discussed and challenged” (DEC23).

This finding should, however, be seen in context with responses to another question which asked respondents to rank a list of 27 global issues on a scale of 1 to 5. While corporate power was ranked equal first by NGOs it was only ranked eighteenth by DECs. This finding suggesting that corporate power is not regarded as central to the aims of DE perhaps reflects the lack of discourse on the significance of global corporations in relation to justice, equality and sustainability.

### **A Framework for Corporate Power in DE Pedagogy**

The research, particularly the interviews, gathered suggestions on the skills and knowledge people should acquire to critically analyse and assess the role of global corporations in society. These can be summarised as:

- Considering our historical, present and future relationships with global corporations as citizens, consumers and workers;
- Expressing empathy and solidarity with communities damaged by and challenging corporate abuses of power; and
- Aiming collective action to help ensure that the operations of global corporations are ethical, equitable, just and environmentally sustainable.

The challenge is to apply existing DE pedagogical frameworks to devise methodologies for presenting information about corporate power, and its underpinning neoliberal ideology, so that people can research and explore, engage in dialogue and make their own assessments and conclusions. A synthesis of ideas from the research suggests the following possible framework of attributes that DE could seek to encourage people to develop in relation to corporate power.

**Figure 1. A DE Framework for Critical Literacy on Corporate Power**

|                           |                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING | History of corporations, including their involvement in colonialism                                 |
|                           | The legal status of corporations                                                                    |
|                           | The neoliberal ideology that supports corporate power                                               |
|                           | The political, economic, social, cultural and environmental dimensions of corporate power           |
|                           | Positive and negative impacts of global corporations on society and the environment                 |
|                           | The role of corporations in education                                                               |
|                           | The methods used by corporations to develop young people as consumers'                              |
|                           | The scope for ethical corporate behaviours                                                          |
|                           | Differences between corporations and ethically orientated private businesses and social enterprises |
| SKILLS                    | Thinking critically about complex issues                                                            |
|                           | Analysing the media                                                                                 |
|                           | Giving space to different perspectives and voices                                                   |
|                           | Making informed choices                                                                             |
|                           | Creativity in ethical and sustainable behaviour                                                     |
|                           | Imagining different futures                                                                         |
| VALUES                    | Commitment to global justice                                                                        |
|                           | Respect for human rights                                                                            |
|                           | Respect for the natural environment and the Earth's biocapacity                                     |
|                           | Motivation to take action                                                                           |

## Conclusion

After three decades of economic globalisation and the inexorable rise of global corporations and hyper-consumption, we live in a world where a tiny minority enjoy unprecedented wealth while almost half the population is denied basic goods and services, and the natural environment is being ravaged. The future actions of global corporations will be crucial in determining the well-being of humanity and the Earth's ecosystem. It seems improbable that 'the commercialisation of all resources and their distribution through a tiny number of oligarchic corporations' will ensure a healthy outcome (Makwana, 2006b). So where does DE fit into this picture? Of what value will our efforts

be to help create tomorrow's global citizens if democracy continues to exist in name only? For as long as the DE sector remains largely silent about corporate power in both its discourse and practice, the answer is likely to be very little. We ignore this elephant in the room at our peril.

I believe that DE can offer a pedagogy of hope to educators and citizens that can question and challenge the hegemony of corporate power. As Giroux states:

“Critical pedagogy currently offers the very best, perhaps the only, chance for young people to develop and assert a sense of their rights and responsibilities to participate in governing, and simply being governed by prevailing ideological and material forces” (Giroux, 2010).

The research I have conducted indicated that there is for example scope for greater DEC and NGO collaboration to develop resources, curricula and activities on corporate power that enable both deeper learning and link learning to engagement in action for justice and sustainability. DE can provide expertise in designing educational resources and participatory methodologies appropriate to engaging people in learning and motivating them to take action. NGOs can provide the expert and up-to-date knowledge of corporate practices, economic and political systems, and expertise in developing effective campaigning strategies. Further, the Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) strategy adopted by the EU provides the promise of resources to facilitate collaboration on global learning, advocacy and campaigning on corporate power (Development Education and the European Commission, 2010).

Understanding corporate power should be central to DE's aims of enabling people to understand global development issues, and enabling active and effective global citizenship. In practice this can be achieved through developing critical literacy to enable: a deeper understanding of how global corporations secure and sustain their power; engagement with global corporations to promote justice and sustainability; and a global civil society that demands corporate accountability and supports alternative ethical economic and business models.

## References

- ActionAid (2011) *Calling Time: Why SABMiller should stop dodging taxes in Africa*, available: [http://www.actionaid.org.uk/doc\\_lib/calling\\_time\\_on\\_tax\\_avoidance.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org.uk/doc_lib/calling_time_on_tax_avoidance.pdf) (accessed 24 February 2012).
- Allen, K (2007) *The Corporate Takeover of Ireland*, Dublin: Irish Academic Press Ltd.
- Andreotti, V (2006) 'Soft versus critical global citizenship education', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 3, pp. 40-51.
- Baby Milk Action (n.d.) 'Seeing Through the Spin', available: <http://www.babymilkaction.org/spin/index.html>, (accessed 12 February 2012).
- Bakan, J (2005) *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power*, London: Constable.
- Beder, S (2008) 'The Corporate Assault on Democracy', *The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy*, vol.4, no.1, January 2008.
- Beder, S (2009) *This Little Kiddy Went to Market: The corporate capture of childhood*, London: Pluto Press.
- Bourn, D, 'Development Education: Where does it come from and what does it look like', podcast, available: [http://www.deeep.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=65:online-conferences&catid=36:newsblog&Itemid=68](http://www.deeep.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=65:online-conferences&catid=36:newsblog&Itemid=68) (accessed 24 July 2011).
- Bryan, A (2011) 'Another cog in the anti-politics machine? The "declawing" of development education', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring 2011, pp. 1-14.
- Cameron, J and Fairbrass, S (2004) 'From development awareness to enabling effective support: the changing profile of development education in England', *Journal of International Development*, 16, pp. 729-740.
- Cerny, P (1999) 'Globalization and the erosion of democracy', *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 36, Issue 1, August 1999, pp. 1-26.
- Cerny, P (2008) 'Embedding Neoliberalism: The Evolution of a Hegemonic Paradigm', *The Journal of International Trade and Diplomacy*, 2 (1), Spring 2008, pp. 1-46.
- Darnton, A and Kirk, M (2011) *Finding Frames: New ways to engage the UK public in global poverty*, London: Oxfam/DfID.
- Development Education and the European Commission, 'State of the DEAR exercise', Lamarque, C, EuropeAid, Helsinki, 18 November 2010.

DfES (2005) *Developing the global dimension in the school curriculum*, available: <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/Page1/DFES-1409-2005#downloadableparts> (accessed 14 February 2012).

DfID, available: <http://www.DFID.gov.uk/development-awareness-review> (accessed 6 August 2011).

DfID (2011) *The Engine of development: The private sector and prosperity for poor people*, available: <http://www.DFID.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/Private-sector-approach-paper-May2011.pdf> (accessed 14 February 2012).

Douzinis, C (2010) 'Europe or The End of Politics', *Greek Left Review*, available: <http://greekleftreview.wordpress.com/2010/08/16/europe-or-the-end-of-politics/> (accessed 9 February 2012).

Egan, A (2011) 'Development education and corporate power', unpublished MA dissertation, Institute of Education, University of London.

Ellis, M (2010) 'Critical global citizenship for deliberative democracies: Exchanging Ideas on Europe', *Academic association for contemporary European Studies (UACES)*, available: <http://www.uaces.org/pdf/papers/1002/Ellis.pdf> (accessed 14 February 2012).

Giroux, H (2010) 'Lessons to be learned from Paulo Freire as education is being taken over by the mega rich', *Truthout*, available: <http://archive.truthout.org/lessons-be-learned-from-paulo-freire-education-is-being-taken-over-mega-rich65363> (accessed 14 February 2012).

Gyoh, S (2011) 'Development education and the global response: trading purpose for professionalism', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring 2011, pp. 87-95.

Jacobs, R (2012) 'This is not the democracy that we fought for' interviewed by Jeff Conant, *Pambazuka News*, Issue 567, available: <http://pambazuka.org/en/category/features/79403> (accessed 14 February 2012).

Just Business, <http://www.jusbiz.org/>

Keet, D (2010) "The Crisis" and the Crises of Global Capitalism: Challenges for, and Alternatives from "The South", TNI Working Paper, available: <http://www.tni.org/sites/www.tni.org/files/crisesandalternativesfromthesouth03-10.pdf>, (accessed 14 February 2012).

Kiersey, N (2011) 'Everyday Neoliberalism and the Subjectivity of Crisis: Post-Political Control in an Era of Financial Turmoil', *Journal of Critical Globalisation Studies*, Issue 4 pp. 23-44.

Kirby, P (2012) 'When Banks Cannibalize the State: Responses to Ireland's Economic Collapse', *Socialist Register*, pp. 249-268.

Korten, D (2001) *When Corporations Rule the World*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Bloomfield, Connecticut: Kumarian Press.

Lancashire Global Education Centre Ltd, <http://www.lgec.org.uk/About>.

Lazarus, N (2011) 'What postcolonial theory doesn't say', *Race & Class*, 53:3, pp. 3-27.

Lownsbrough, H (2009), 'New Labour, foreign policy and NGOs', *Renewal*, 17.1, Spring 2009, pp. 10-14.

Makwana, R (2006a) 'Neoliberalism and Economic Globalization', *Share the World's Resources*.

Makwana, R (2006b) 'Multinational Corporations (MNCs): Beyond The Profit Motive', *Share the World's Resources*, available: <http://www.stwr.org/multinational-corporations/multinational-corporations-mncs-beyond-the-profit-motive.html>, (accessed 14 February 2012).

Manji, F (2002) 'The missionary position: NGOs and development in Africa', *International Affairs* 78: 3 pp. 567-583, available: <http://www.stwr.org/globalization/neoliberalism-and-economic-globalization.html>, (accessed 14 February 2012).

McCloskey, S (2011) 'Rising to the Challenge: Development Education, NGOs and Urgent Need for Social Change', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring 2011, pp. 32-46.

National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) (2011) *Counting the Cuts: The Impact of Spending Cuts on the UK voluntary and community sector*, August 2011, available: [http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/sites/default/files/counting\\_the\\_cuts.pdf](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/sites/default/files/counting_the_cuts.pdf) (accessed 14 February 2012).

Ni Chasaide, N (2009) 'Development education and campaigning linkages', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 8, Spring 2009, pp. 28-34.

Occupy Together, <http://www.occupytogether.org/actions/> (accessed 04 February 2012).

Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry (OSDE), available: <http://www.osdemethodology.org.uk> (accessed 14 February 2012).

Ortiz, I and Cummins, M (2011) 'Global Inequality: Beyond the Bottom Billion - A Rapid Review of Income Distribution in 141 Countries', UNICEF, available: [http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Global\\_Inequality\\_REVISSED\\_-\\_5\\_July.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Global_Inequality_REVISSED_-_5_July.pdf) (accessed 14 February 2012).

Plehwe, D and Walpen, B (2007) 'Between network and complex organization: The Making of Neoliberal Knowledge and Hegemony' in D Plehwe, B Walpen and G Neunhöffer (eds.) *Neoliberal Hegemony: A Global Critique*, London: Routledge.

Poverty to Prosperity (P2P) (n.d.) 'Climate Change and Economy', available: <http://poverty2prosperity.eu/packs>, (accessed 14 February 2012).

Powys Environment and Development Education Centre (PEDEC), <http://www.pedec.org.uk/commercial/>.

Quartapelle, L (2011) 'Mozambique: the challenge of fighting external dependence, between aid and hydrocarbons', ISPI Analysis, No. 88, December 2011.

Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC) resources, available: [http://www.risc.org.uk/education/risc\\_publications.php](http://www.risc.org.uk/education/risc_publications.php), (accessed 12 February 2012).

Rugendyke, B and Hearfield, C (2011), *Tomorrow's Force for Good: Finding common ground in meeting international development challenges*, NSW, Australia: The University of New England, available: [http://www.forceforgood.com/Uploaded\\_Content/tool/11102011125437856.pdf](http://www.forceforgood.com/Uploaded_Content/tool/11102011125437856.pdf), (accessed 12 February 2012).

Schwab, K (2008) 'Global Corporate Citizenship: Working with Governments and Civil Society', *Foreign Affairs*, 87: 1, pp. 107-118.

Schattle, H (2008) 'Education for global citizenship: Illustrations of ideological pluralism and adaptation', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 13: 1, pp. 73-94.

Selby, D and Kagawa, F (2011) 'Development education and education for sustainable development: Are they striking a Faustian bargain?', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring 2011, pp. 15-31.

Tandon, Y (2012) *Demystifying Aid*, Oxford: Pambazuka Press.

Think Global (2011), 'Cultivating a global outlook for a global economy', available: <http://www.think-global.org.uk/resources/item.asp?d=6206> (accessed 14 February 2012).

Vitali, S, Glattfelder, J and Battiston, S (2011) 'The Network of Global Corporate Control', available: [http://arxiv.org/PS\\_cache/arxiv/pdf/1107/1107.5728v2.pdf](http://arxiv.org/PS_cache/arxiv/pdf/1107/1107.5728v2.pdf) (accessed 14 February 2012).

WWF International (2006) *Species and People: Linked Futures*, Switzerland: WWF, available: [http://assets.panda.org/downloads/wwf\\_mdgreport\\_2006.pdf](http://assets.panda.org/downloads/wwf_mdgreport_2006.pdf), (accessed 12 February 2012).

Zurayk, R (2011) 'Feeding the Arab Uprisings', *Perspectives* No. 2, May 2011.

## PUTTING THE POLITICS BACK IN: RADICAL EDUCATION AND ACTION IN THE CAUSE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

John Hilary

Within a week of taking office in May 2010, the incoming British government announced that it was cancelling five development education projects funded by the Department for International Development (DfID), with immediate effect. In the same announcement, the government suspended the £6.5 million Global Development Engagement Fund that had been designed to launch later that year as the consolidated funding stream for development awareness projects in Britain, but which was ultimately scrapped before it had even been introduced. Andrew Mitchell, then Secretary of State for International Development, further announced that he would be commissioning a review of the entire programme of development awareness raising that had been funded by DfID over the previous decade (1).

The review of aid funding of development awareness projects was carried out by the Central Office of Information – a government department which was itself destined to be abolished in 2012. The review noted that DfID funding of its ‘Building Support for Development’ programme had grown from £1.5 million in 1998/99 to £24 million in 2009/10, with a cumulative investment of £116 million over the period (COI, 2011: 12). Following the publication of the review, Mitchell announced in July 2011 that the British government would no longer be supporting any development awareness schemes in the future, and that government funding for public education on issues of global poverty would be restricted to work in schools. Any development awareness raising for adults would be a matter for non-governmental organisations (NGOs), trade unions and other groups to fund themselves.

That this was a political decision had already been spelled out by the review itself. Its authors had declared themselves confident that ‘raising awareness of development issues in the UK has contributed to reducing poverty overseas’. Equally, the review noted that the complexity of causal connections between development awareness and poverty reduction made it impossible to prove conclusively that DfID’s funding of such schemes had made a direct contribution to reducing poverty. The authors summarised their findings as follows:

“From the evidence reviewed, we conclude that raising awareness of development issues in the UK is likely to contribute to reducing global poverty but it is not possible to establish a direct link or quantify the contribution made by DFID-funded activity. Therefore, a decision to continue funding activity in this area cannot be entirely

evidence-based. Continued funding will, by default, therefore be a matter of opinion and judgement and therefore a political decision” (Ibid: 4-5; emphasis in original).

For a Conservative-led coalition, the decision to scrap the British development education programme was an easy one. Any project designed to build public awareness of international development issues automatically includes an examination of how the neoliberal economic policies foisted on the majority world over the past 30 years have failed dismally, condemning millions to long-term poverty while enriching a new plutocracy at both national and international levels. Such a narrative delegitimises the political elite’s continuing adherence to such policies, notably its promotion of free trade, market deregulation and privatisation in favour of transnational capital. By cancelling the development awareness funding stream, the Conservative-led coalition was removing an unwanted source of criticism at a time when it was redirecting its own international development programme towards the most regressive forms of intervention, notably its private sector model of ‘output-based aid’ (Hilary, 2010).

It would be easy to portray this as a Manichean struggle between the forces of good and evil, the former represented by civil society groups striving to promote better public understanding of the root causes of global poverty, the latter being a right-wing government intent on using the aid budget to underpin its particular brand of free market fundamentalism. The truth, however, is more worrying. Over the past two decades, a highly professionalised NGO sector has increasingly moved to identify international development with overseas aid, despite the numerous critiques of such an elision from the majority world itself (most recently: Tandon, 2012). This trend has been particularly marked in the context of the campaign for countries of the rich world to attain the UN target of spending 0.7 percent of gross national income on official development assistance – a campaign that has been immensely successful in Britain, but at the expense of deeper public understanding of the root causes of global poverty.

This article will outline the trajectory of public awareness raising on issues of global justice in the British context, which is where I work. It will focus on the major campaign mobilisations of recent years as well as on more general development education programmes, on the understanding that there needs to be the maximum possible overlap between learning and action in the building of any movement for social justice (Ni Chasaide, 2009). It will also explore the potential for new forms of ‘solidarity’ based not on colonialist intervention on behalf of the Other, which has been the driving force for so much development education and global justice campaigning in Britain, but on the construction of a political project to build awareness of (and action against) a common enemy at home and abroad. The fact

that the austerity policies currently being visited upon the peoples of Europe mirror those that have long been inflicted on the peoples of the global South by institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) offers a unique opportunity to join up domestic struggles with those in other parts of the world. I hope that the reflections here may have relevance for the global justice movement in Ireland and in other countries, even if many of the specifics described below are peculiar to the British context. The political debate over the direction of the global justice movement in Britain has been heating up recently, as described in a previous issue of *Policy & Practice* (McCloskey, 2012). I offer these thoughts as someone engaged at the centre of that debate.

### **Make Poverty History and Beyond**

In retrospect, the years immediately before and after the turn of the century seem like a high water mark in the global justice movement. By 1998, a coordinated international campaign of resistance had successfully defeated the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), the treaty that had been designed to provide foreign investors with sweeping new powers in expanding their operations across the world (Deblock and Brunelle, 2000). The alter-globalisation movement had burst onto the public scene in mass demonstrations on the streets of Seattle at the third ministerial conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), preventing the launch of a new round of trade liberalisation negotiations in 1999 and sowing the seeds for the WTO's eventual long-term decline. The Jubilee 2000 movement had mobilised millions of activists across the world and secured \$110 billion in promised debt cancellation from the G7 group of the world's leading economies (Barrett, 2000). In the Western Hemisphere, mass resistance from social movements across Latin America had consigned George W. Bush's dream of the Free Trade Area of the Americas to a historical footnote.

International development NGOs had played their part in this 'movement of movements', using development education and outreach programmes to build public understanding of the key issues of the globalised economy, and mobilising millions behind campaigns for policy change by governments of all stripes. It was remarkable to sit in public meetings with trade justice activists at that time and to register just how deeply people had learned of the inner machinations of international trade negotiations and of the effects of globalisation on vulnerable communities around the world. It was equally striking to see how able and willing these activists were to challenge representatives of the British government (at that time, a Labour government) over its insistent promotion of free trade policies that would heap more disaster on industry and agriculture across the global South. This level of deep engagement was the result of many years' concerted effort by international development NGOs to build their members' understanding

of the workings of the global political economy, including technical issues that might traditionally have been considered ‘too difficult’ for ordinary supporters to understand.

Such was the background to the Make Poverty History (MPH) campaign mounted by a grand coalition of 540 organisations during 2005. While a call for ‘more and better aid’ was included in the MPH manifesto, structural changes to the global political economy were to the fore in the policy portfolio agreed by all coalition members in advance of the year. In addition to the central calls for trade justice and further debt cancellation, the MPH manifesto demanded new structures of corporate accountability to challenge the power of capital in the globalised economy, as well as a radical democratisation of the World Bank and IMF as the primary institutions of global economic governance. The overall framing of the manifesto in the language of justice rather than charity was an explicit attempt to move the public beyond the regressive understanding of international development as coterminous with overseas aid that had been the enduring legacy of Bob Geldof’s celebrity Live Aid concerts back in 1985 (Martin, Culey and Evans, 2006).

In the final event, however, 2005 saw the aid message drown out all calls for structural change in the global economy, not least as a result of the two Live8 concerts organised by Geldof to coincide first with the major mobilisation of the MPH coalition in Edinburgh and then with the march organised by more radical groups to Gleneagles to challenge the legitimacy of the G8. The top line messaging of the MPH campaign itself served to reinforce the framing of poverty as an issue of charity rather than justice, with unprecedentedly high public recognition of the campaign ‘brand’ coming at the expense of any deeper understanding as to why the coalition had come together in the first place. Powerful though they undoubtedly were, MPH communications became increasingly divorced from the agreed policy demands of the campaign, and the issue of control over public messaging became a source of immense tension for the coalition as a whole (Sireau, 2009). As a result, one important lesson learned from 2005 was that a campaign’s policy demands have minimal relevance to its broader impact unless carried through into the outward facing communications encountered by the public at large. Another was that global poverty might still be a powerful cause for concern among the general populace, but that most people’s understandings of international development still boiled down to a combination of humanitarian interventions, aid flows and, at best, debt relief.

In the years following the dissolution of the MPH coalition, many of the larger international development NGOs moved away from awareness raising on economic issues such as debt, trade and corporate power towards climate change campaigns or enterprise-driven responses to poverty, thus failing to engage their members or the broader public on the key issues of the global economic crisis that swept the world from 2008 onwards (Metcalfe, 2012). Yet in preparation for the London G20 summit to be held in April

2009, international development NGOs joined forces with all major British trade unions and environmental campaign groups to form the Put People First coalition. The coalition's campaign manifesto situated its demands on 'jobs, justice and climate' squarely within a critique of neoliberalism and its failure to offer any solutions to the global economic crisis, and deliberately addressed the consequences of that crisis in Britain at the same time as the highlighting its effects in the majority world (Put People First, 2009). While the campaign was instructive in uniting a broad range of actors behind an explicitly political message that spanned both North and South, it had none of the public reach of MPH and thus did little to challenge the mainstream public understanding of international development as broadly coterminous with overseas aid.

### **Reframing the Discourse**

Growing concern had long been expressed by more radical NGOs at the persistent prioritisation of 'more and better aid' as the international development sector's primary demand on the British government both before and since MPH – notably in the run-up to the 2010 general election, when the call for all parties to honour the 0.7 percent aid target was further intensified out of fear that an incoming Conservative government might abandon it. Yet the most powerful recognition of the problem caused by this reductive agenda came in the form of a research study initiated by Oxfam and published in January 2011 by the international development umbrella group Bond. Based on thinking developed by environmental NGOs into how best to frame complex problems so as to sustain public engagement over the long term (Crompton, 2010), the report *Finding Frames* showed how the portrayal of global justice issues in NGO communications had perpetuated a perverse understanding of North-South relations inherited from the 1980s (the Live Aid Legacy), characterised by the relationship between 'Powerful Giver' and 'Grateful Receiver'. The MPH campaign was held to exemplify the central paradox facing international development NGOs in that it had succeeded in mobilising unprecedented numbers of people behind its demands on global poverty, but at the same time had 'changed nothing' in terms of the British public's understanding of the issues (Darnton and Kirk, 2011: 6). The report concluded that NGO communications urgently needed to reframe the international development agenda in order to secure deeper engagement from the public over the long term, and suggested a set of possible alternatives as a starting point for further discussion (Ibid: 103):

| Current (negative) frame      | Alternative (positive) frames?      |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Charity                       | Justice; Fairness                   |
| Charities                     | Movements; NGOs                     |
| Aid                           | Mutual support; Partnership         |
| Development                   | Well-being; freedom; Responsibility |
| Corruption; Aid effectiveness | Good/bad governance; Fraud          |
| Communications                | Conversations                       |
| Campaigns                     | Engagements; Dialogues              |

While there were obvious shortcomings in some of the alternatives suggested in the above table (most notably, the negative connotations now increasingly associated with NGOs themselves), the overall message of *Finding Frames* was important in that it highlighted the long-term problems caused by the regressive framing of global justice issues in terms of charity, aid and philanthropy, and ascribed responsibility for that state of affairs to the international development NGOs themselves. Despite extensive discussion of the report’s findings at the highest levels of the NGO community, however, reaching the 0.7 percent aid target still remained the principal campaign demand made of the British government by the international development sector in the period following the publication of *Finding Frames*. When asked why so little had changed in the wake of the report’s publication, one senior manager in one of the largest international development NGOs replied simply: ‘It didn’t work for us’. Such remarks serve to confirm the charge already made in *Finding Frames* that many larger NGOs have consciously used negative framing in their communications, despite its acknowledged consequences, because of the increased returns it guarantees to their public fundraising efforts.

Frustrated at the unwillingness of the larger NGOs to follow through on the recommendations of *Finding Frames*, a group of senior representatives from campaigning NGOs and trade unions formed the Progressive Development Forum in 2012 so as to create a space to challenge the dominant discourse on global justice issues in the British context. At the Forum’s first meeting, held under the banner of ‘Beyond Aid, Towards Justice’, several participants highlighted the importance of renewing education and outreach programmes around key economic and political issues in order to rebuild the movement for global justice in Britain; the Forum itself was followed by two public meetings in London and Manchester on the same theme. Equally, participants spoke of the need to join forces with new movements for social justice in the domestic context such as Occupy, UK Uncut and local anti-austerity coalitions, and to break down analytical barriers between North and

South (PDF, 2012). With a view to the continued framing of the global justice agenda in the British context, the forum expressed particular concern at the revival of the most negative imagery in NGO fundraising communications, in flagrant breach of the various good practice guidelines on depictions of global poverty agreed over the years – most recently, the code of conduct developed by the Irish NGO platform Dóchas and eventually adopted at the European level in 2007 (Concord, 2006). Examples of the most degrading images, notably those of emaciated and helpless infants awaiting sponsorship or other acts of mercy from Western donors, were subsequently posted on the Progressive Development Forum website in order to start a broader discussion on how to eradicate their use once and for all.

### **The IF Campaign**

There had long been discussions as to whether another campaign coalition similar to MPH should be formed for when the G8 returned to UK territory in 2013. While those discussions had largely stalled within the international development sector's official coordination structures, the five NGOs that constitute the British Overseas Aid Group (BOAG) – Oxfam, Save the Children, Christian Aid, ActionAid and CAFOD – had engaged in exploratory discussions with the British government over the possibility of mounting a campaign on food and hunger during 2013. The campaign, trailed in the media from as early as April 2012, was eventually launched in January 2013 as the IF campaign – or, to give it its full title, Enough Food for Everyone IF. The policy demands of the campaign would be threefold: more aid for nutrition and food interventions; more transparency from governments and corporations, including on tax issues; and an end to land grabbing. According to internal documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, the British government had been coordinating its plans with the BOAG agencies over the IF campaign since 2011, and sought to use the campaign to create a 'golden moment' prior to the G8 summit that would promote British prime minister David Cameron as a leader in the fight against global hunger (War on Want, 2013).

Several NGOs and trade unions that had previously been active members of the MPH and Put People First coalitions declared themselves unable to join the IF campaign. For some, the prospect of supporting an image of Cameron's government as a force for social justice was politically unthinkable at a time when its policies were sending unprecedented numbers to food banks at home and having a profoundly negative effect on the poorest and most vulnerable abroad. For others, including the UK Food Group (the body responsible for coordinating civil society action on global food issues), the IF campaign's refusal to align itself with the worldwide peasant farmers' movement La Via Campesina, and especially its call for food sovereignty, was equally unacceptable – not least because those farmers were supposed

to feature high among the campaign's ultimate 'beneficiaries'. The absence of any engagement with Southern partners had already been identified as a failing of the MPH campaign eight years earlier (Hodkinson, 2005); by now, international development NGOs' almost total disconnection from grassroots social movements had called their very legitimacy into question (Banks and Hulme, 2012). The IF campaign suffered from this crisis of legitimacy from the outset, with many individuals within the member organisations of the coalition expressing their profound unease as to its politics before, during and after the termination of the campaign.

In the end, the IF campaign claimed success for securing new aid for global nutrition initiatives and for seeing the issues of tax and transparency appear on the agenda of the G8 summit held in Fermanagh in June 2013. Yet in terms of public framing of global justice issues – the outstanding challenge identified in *Finding Frames* – the IF campaign further reinforced previous stereotypes of the 'Grateful Receiver' awaiting generosity from the hand of the 'Powerful Giver'. Media coverage of the government hunger summit that was held to coincide with the IF campaign's main rally in London's Hyde Park focused almost exclusively on the \$4 billion pledged to nutrition projects around the world, and IF campaign representatives welcomed the new aid sums as a 'historic breakthrough in the fight against hunger'. David Cameron was duly rewarded with his 'golden moment' when he was heralded as a leader in the fight against global poverty by billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates at the IF campaign rally. Food sovereignty activists mounted a demonstration outside Cameron's hunger summit in solidarity with African farmers' movements protesting against the G8's pro-corporate New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition; however, despite agreeing in their own policy analysis that the New Alliance represents a profound threat to the future of farming across Africa, IF campaign members did not join the demonstration (Hall, 2013).

### **Beyond Colonialism**

Despite periodic efforts to redirect it towards the structural failings of the capitalist world system, the dominant NGO discourse on international development is firmly locked in a colonial mindset. The demand for humanitarian action 'on behalf of' the peoples of the majority world draws its inspiration from the same wellspring as the original 'civilising mission' that provided justification for nineteenth century colonialism, in which the Other must be effaced or silenced in order to be granted salvation (Said, 1995; Spivak, 1988). This sacred duty on the part of the colonial subject reflects a particularly British form of narcissism stemming from an imperial history that is yet to be properly deconstructed in the popular imagination, and one which finds its fullest expression in relation to that most potent symbol of indigence in the modern era, the homogenised construct that is

'Africa' (Harrison, 2013). Fundraising images of emaciated African children awaiting rescue by Western donors, already noted above, represent a direct revival of the imperial tradition by way of the 'colonial gaze' (Dogra, 2012). The religious undertones of the project are never far from the surface: while colonial missionaries sought to save souls, today's aid agencies, according to their own preferred formulation, 'save lives' (see the classic statement of the continuity between missionaries and international development NGOs by Manji and McCoill, 2002).

Appeals to this tradition have been highly successful in the British context, not only in sustaining the fundraising income of international development NGOs over the years but also in mobilising large numbers of people behind global poverty campaigns, most notably the MPH campaign of 2005. It is unclear whether such levels of support can be sustained indefinitely: new surveys of public opinion reveal a growing scepticism as to the credibility of NGO messaging on international issues, and in particular the exaggerated claims made by aid agencies for what the 'transactional' model of shallow engagement by donation or child sponsorship can achieve in ending world poverty (Glennie, Straw and Wild, 2012). More importantly, however, the past few years have seen British international development NGOs increasingly distance themselves from any challenges to the power structures or ideologies that cause poverty, inequality and injustice, whether at home or in the majority world. This abdication of any political agenda ensures that mobilisations on issues of global poverty are not just tolerated by British politicians but actively welcomed as useful distractions, especially when they offer a ready source of positive public relations for an undeserving government, as the IF campaign did. Driven by the metrics of donor relations, international development NGOs have calculated that it is in their interests to work in active collaboration with the powerful – whether G8 governments or transnational corporations – in order to achieve tangible advocacy 'wins' (however illusory) which can then be reported back to supporters as proof of continuing influence. By contrast, mounting long and difficult challenges to power holds little attraction in such calculations.

The decisive rupture that needs to be made is political and radical. International development NGOs must engage once more in political analysis that goes to the heart of the continuing scandals of global poverty, inequality and injustice, articulating a transformative agenda which is consonant with the demands of social movements across the world, not (as at present) in opposition to them. Action on the basis of such analysis will allow NGOs to reclaim their place as allies in the broader global justice movement, from which they have been largely absent for many years. Taking on the structural issues of the global economy in turn means building new communities of activists by means of political education programmes that connect the global with the domestic and explore the myriad alternatives to capitalism from

across the world. This entails linking up with new social movements as they appear in our own political contexts – as a number of more radical NGOs did, for example, in contributing to the Tent City University run by the Occupy London movement outside St Paul’s Cathedral in 2011, or with the Bank of Ideas discussion space set up in the occupied UBS building in the City of London that same year. Linking with our earlier work in partnership with grassroots anti-eviction movements in South Africa and their actions around the FIFA World Cup in 2010, War on Want also joined in community protest actions around the London Olympics, bringing a global perspective to the day of debate on housing rights in the context of mega-sporting events held in the empty Georgian mansion owned by sculptor Anish Kapoor and occupied by the Bread and Circuses collective in June 2012 (Walker and Jones, 2012).

Any such political action will necessarily entail a radical break with the colonial mindset that has for so long afflicted the communication of global justice issues in the British context. By establishing a continuity between the neoliberal economic policies visited on the peoples of South and North alike, we can at last dispense with the idea that action in solidarity with the oppressed in the majority world is a sacred duty towards the Other, rather than part of a global fight against a common enemy. This latter conception of solidarity as a commonality of interests which unites people across geographical divides is the dominant understanding of solidarity in the socialist tradition, and requires a heightened (and constantly renegotiated) political consciousness of the root causes of oppression if it is not to become a purely metaphorical device (Hyman, 2011) (2). NGO engagement with such forms of active, reciprocal solidarity could in turn unlock the potential of joining with movements for transformative social change in our own societies, rather than existing in the sealed ghetto of ‘international development’, as has so often been the case up to now.

As mentioned at the start of this article, the advent of perma-austerity in the countries of the rich North offers a unique opportunity for international development NGOs to accomplish this radical shift by means of a political analysis of the driving forces behind the imposition of neoliberal doctrine, North and South. For European countries that have had their austerity programmes visited upon them as the condition of IMF or Troika bailouts, there is an obvious continuity with the structural adjustment programmes imposed on the countries of the majority world by the IMF and World Bank as conditionality for new loans and debt relief during the ‘lost decades’ of the 1980s and 1990s. Making this connection in no way seeks to equate the experiences, or to suggest that neoliberal attacks on the state in the rich North have an equivalent human impact to the wholesale destruction of economies and livelihoods caused by the institutions of global economic governance in the global South. The point of linking the different instances of capitalist aggression in various parts of the world is to raise awareness of the

political programme behind them, and to sharpen people's understanding of the ultimate adversary in the fight for change.

Such was the intention of the 'Austerity is Working... for the 1%' conference run by War on Want, the public services trade union PCS and a number of other international development NGOs in March 2013, linking up experiences of resistance to austerity in Europe with the struggles against privatisation and market liberalisation that have been sustained for so long in the majority world. Such also is the aim of the programme of trade union education we are currently running with PCS on the importance of tax justice as a precondition of equitable social models in both North and South – a programme due to be rolled out through trade union structures in Ireland and Sweden in its second year, and then to the rest of Europe through the public service trade union federation EPSU. We have also engaged in similar linking of the domestic and global on issues of food sovereignty and militarism, as in the workshops we ran in The Spark in central London during June 2013, an open space organised with the Jubilee Debt Campaign, London Roots Collective and People & Planet in order to raise awareness on a range of economic justice themes and as a hub for sharing information about protest actions in the week leading up to the G8 summit in Fermanagh. Following on from the demonstration against the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, mentioned above, this included participation in actions held in the heart of London's financial district at Canary Wharf, linking up struggles against austerity and debt from around the world under the unifying banner: 'They Owe Us!'.

If the NGO community across Europe were to unite behind a coordinated programme of radical education and action that challenged national leaders and EU institutions to abandon their promotion of pro-capitalist policies in Europe and across the world, we could make a significant and genuine contribution to the cause of social justice. Such a programme would of necessity take us into the political arena, including an honest examination of whether the structures of the European Union itself are compatible with social justice and democracy in the longer term. In this exercise, international development NGOs have the advantage of using their privileged connections to global information networks to draw on many positive challenges to existing systems from other parts of the world, most notably the inspiring example of social movements rising up in successful political opposition to entrenched elites in Latin America over the past decade – and the extraordinary shift in international relations that this has effected within the Western Hemisphere (Boron, 2012; Burbach, Fox and Fuentes, 2013). While NGOs cannot pretend to command the legitimacy or power to effect such revolutions in their own right, they can form part of movements for transformative change and engage in partnership with others in those movements by means of the particular contributions they

have to make. Action-oriented education programmes and resources have an important role to play in building social justice movements and informing the next generation of activists – which is why the Conservative-led government had no compunction in scrapping state support for such programmes when it came into office. International development NGOs have the potential to make a genuine difference in the fight for a better world, but only if we choose to do so.

### Notes

- (1) All references to international development, development awareness and development education are made in relation to the professional sectors defined under those categories and despite the profound problems at the heart of the terminology, as contested in myriad works from such diverse perspectives as Chang (2011), Esteva (2010), Latouche (2001), Gutiérrez (1971) etc.
- (2) Rather than revitalising this traditional conception of solidarity by means of a higher order statement of shared interests, Hyman argues for trade unions to adopt a new form of solidarity based on ‘mutuality despite difference’, understood in humanitarian (and, in my view, highly unsatisfactory) terms as “an obligation for the strong to support the weak”. He does, however, concede that this approach risks turning solidarity into “a synonym for charity, implying pitying support for passive victims” (Hyman, 2011: 26).

## References

- Banks, N and Hulme, D (2012) *The Role of NGOs and Civil Society in Development and Poverty Reduction*, Manchester: Brooks World Poverty Institute.
- Barrett, M (2000) *The world will never be the same again*, London: Jubilee 2000 Coalition.
- Boron, A (2012) 'Strategy and Tactics in Popular Struggles in Latin America' in L Panitch, G Albo and V Chibber (eds.) *The Question of Strategy: Socialist Register 2013*, Pontypool: Merlin Press.
- Burbach, R, Fox, M and Fuentes, F (2013) *Latin America's Turbulent Transitions: The Future of Twenty-First Century Socialism*, London: Zed Books.
- Chang, H-J (2011) 'Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark: how development has disappeared from today's "development" discourse' in S Khan and J Christiansen (eds.) *Towards New Developmentalism: Market as means rather than master*, Abingdon: Routledge.
- COI (2011) *Review of using aid funds in the UK to promote awareness of global poverty*, London: Central Office of Communication.
- Concord (2006) *Code of Conduct on Images and Messages*, Brussels: Concord.
- Crompton, T (2010) *Common Cause: The Case for Working with our Cultural Values*, Godalming: WWF.
- Darnton, A and Kirk, M (2011) *Finding Frames: New ways to engage the public in global poverty*, London: Bond.
- Deblock, C and Brunelle, D (2000) 'Globalization and New Normative Frameworks: The Multilateral Agreement on Investment' in G Lachapelle and J Trent (eds.) *Globalization, Governance and Identity: The emergence of new partnerships*, Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal.
- Dogra, N (2012) *Representations of Global Poverty: Aid, Development and International NGOs*, London: IB Tauris.
- Esteva, G (2010) 'Development' in W Sachs (ed.) *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, London: Zed Books.
- Glennie, A, Straw, W and Wild, L (2012) *Understanding public attitudes to aid and development*, London: IPPR and ODI.
- Gutiérrez, G (1971) 'Liberation and Development', *Cross Currents*, No. 21, Summer 1971, pp. 243–256.

Hall, A (2013) 'G8 hunger summit provokes protest and praise', *New Internationalist*, 10 June 2013.

Harrison, G (2013) *The African Presence: Representations of Africa in the construction of Britishness*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Hilary, J (2010) 'A myopic Tory approach to fighting global poverty', *Guardian*, 29 August 2010.

Hodkinson, S (2005) 'Make the G8 history', *Red Pepper*, July 2005.

Hyman, R (2011) 'Trade unions, global competition and options for solidarity' in A Bieler and I Lindberg (eds.) *Global Restructuring, Labour and the Challenges for Transnational Solidarity*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Latouche, S (2001) 'En finir, une fois pour toutes, avec le développement', *Le Monde diplomatique*, May 2001.

Manji, F and O'Coill, C (2002) 'The missionary position: NGOs and development in Africa', *International Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 3, pp. 567–583.

Martin, A, Culey, C and Evans S (2006) *Make Poverty History 2005 Evaluation*, London: Firetail.

McCloskey, S (2012) 'Aid, NGOs and the Development Sector: Is it Time for a New Direction?', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 15, Autumn, pp. 113–121.

Metcalf, J (2012) *Global Rules, Local Rulers: NGOs, intergovernmental organisations, and public economic debate*. Dunfermline: Carnegie UK Trust.

Ni Chasaide, N (2009) 'Development Education and Campaigning Linkages', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 8, Spring, pp. 28–34.

Progressive Development Forum (PDF) (2012) *Beyond Aid, Towards Justice: A report of the Progressive Development Forum held on 19 July 2012*, London: Progressive Development Forum.

Progressive Development Forum (n.d.), available: <https://progressivedevelopmentforum.wordpress.com/>, (accessed 22 February 2015).

Put People First (2009) *Put People First: Ensuring a response to the economic crisis that delivers democratic governance of the economy for Jobs, Justice, Climate*, London: Put People First.

Said, E (1995) *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, London: Penguin Books.

Sireau, N (2009) *Make Poverty History: Political Communication in Action*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Spivak, G C (1988) 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in C Nelson and L Grossberg (eds.) *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Tandon, Y (2012) *Demystifying Aid*, Cape Town: Pambazuka Press.

Walker, P and Jones, G (2012) 'Anish Kapoor's house in London occupied by protesters', *Guardian*, 22 June 2012.

War on Want (2013) 'War on Want and the IF campaign', 25 January 2013, available: <http://waronwant.org/news/latest-news/17790-war-on-want-and-the-if-campaign>, (accessed 19 August 2013).

## CALL TO ACTION: A EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION STRATEGY

**Rilli Lappalainen**

### **Introduction**

It is ten years since the Council of the European Union approved its resolution on Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR), and yet the European Union (EU), one of the biggest DEAR funders, still does not have a strategy for development education (DE). Considering the ongoing negotiations for the multiannual financial framework and the values which the EU has been built upon - dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity, citizenship and justice - it would be reasonable for the Union to take stronger action committing to DEAR. The European Commission (EC), Council and the European Parliament should build on recent successful processes and set up without delay a European DEAR strategy, based on the DE Consensus, the EC DEAR Study and its follow-up discussions.

Back in 2005, the European Union agreed in the European Consensus on Development that the EU would pay particular attention to development education and raising awareness among EU citizens (Council of the European Union, 2005). Seven years later we can acknowledge that member states, the European Parliament and the Commission as well as civil society have indeed paid greater attention to DEAR. Concepts that are closely linked to DEAR, like global learning, active global citizenship and education for sustainable development, have gained importance both nationally and regionally. This can be seen in the increasing number of national as well as organisational strategies (CONCORD, 2009) and European initiatives (European Commission, 2010) that have been formulated in recent years.

The European Commission is funding DEAR through the Non-State Actors and Local Authorities (NSA-LA) in development framework as well as funding mechanisms beyond overseas development assistance (ODA) such as Youth in Action. However, unlike a growing number of its member states, the European Union still does not have an explicit strategy for development education and the opportunity to develop such a strategy has never been better than today. This article argues the case for a DE strategy and its potential benefits to development stakeholders.

### **Are there Real Commitments to Development Education?**

The need for a DE strategy is already underlined in a growing number of existing commitments like the 2001 resolution on DE issued by the Council of the European Union which underlined that:

“[...] Given the global interdependence of our society, the raising of

awareness by development education and by information contributes to strengthening the feeling of international solidarity, and also helps to create an environment which fosters the establishment of an intercultural society in Europe. Heightening awareness also contributes toward the changing of lifestyles in favor of a model of sustainable development for all” (2001: 2).

Taken into consideration the challenges of intercultural understanding, sustainable lifestyles and international solidarity, the Council called for increased support for development education in 2001 (Ibid).

Just one year later in 2002, the participants attending the Maastricht Global Education Congress organised by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, agreed a European Strategy Framework for improving and increasing Global Education in Europe to the year 2015 as the final declaration of the conference (North-South Centre, 2002). This Congress was a good example of how to bring a range of actors in DE together in common cause and the outcome report is an important reference document that reflects the diversity of representatives from state- and non-state actors that committed to the strategy. However, this paper was not politically binding and lacked systematic implementation through action plans and monitoring mechanisms, leaving its application to each individual actor's will and capacity. Thus, the need for a coordinated ‘strategy framework’ was recognised by a broad range of actors, including member states, the European Parliament, the Commission and civil society representatives.

The next step to systematise DEAR efforts at a European level was the reaction to the commitment to pay particular attention to development education in the European Development Consensus. The European Development Education Multi Stakeholder Process was created at the 2006 Helsinki Development Education Conference and it led to the European Development Education Consensus, unveiled by (then) European Development Commissioner Louis Michel at in Lisbon in 2007. The consensus outlines principles, objectives and challenges for DEAR and contains recommendations for various actors (Multi Stakeholder Group, 2007). A broad range of state- and non-state actors such as national development agencies and ministries, international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD) and civil society platforms participated in the rolling out of this document, which became a reference framework for the whole sector. The Portuguese and Czech national development education strategies refer to the European Development Education Consensus (IPAD, 2010: 16; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2011: 31). However, the ‘DE Consensus’ does not have any legally binding character so is no substitute for a properly endorsed DEAR strategy for the European Union.

In parallel to all of these developments, the interest of the European institutions in a DE strategy increased. The European Parliament stressed

the importance of raising awareness of development issues and called for an overall communication and education strategy, underlining that development education for the European public has been a constant priority for the [development] committee and recommending the inclusion of global/development education within all fields of education (European Parliament, 2008: 1; 2009: 2; 2010: 7). The European Commission, after a general evaluation of DEAR actions funded over ten years, made development education an integral part of the structured dialogue on the involvement of civil society and local authorities in EC development cooperation (European Commission, 2008: 88). The ‘concluding paper’ recommended that:

“The EU Member States and the European Commission should strengthen their strategies for Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR), outlining concepts and objectives, and addressing questions of coherence, complementarity, coordination and the added value of different DEAR actors” (Structured Dialogue, 2011: 21).

The concluding paper of structured dialogue also specified that the EC should use results and recommendations from the DEAR study as the basis for developing its strategic policy statement (Ibid.). The DEAR Study was one of three supporting initiatives to the process, and produced a comprehensive overview and analysis of DEAR policy and practice in the 27 EU member states by the European Commission. Based on this research, 55 short- and long-term recommendations to the EC were formulated in order to improve its activities in the field of DEAR, including one to develop and endorse a strategic DEAR policy statement based on the core recommendations and intermediate objectives suggested in this report. The time was never better to actually do so.

### **Why a European DEAR Strategy?**

Many leading European Union institutions have stated the importance of DEAR and the need for it to be supported and strengthened. So why are we still lacking an EU strategy for DE? Conversely, you might ask why the European Union should go through the difficulty of formally adopting a ‘strategic DEAR policy statement’, when documents such as the DE Consensus and the DEAR study already provide detailed guidance on concepts, objectives and implementation of EC DEAR activities. There are five reasons outlined below why I believe a European strategy should be implemented. They are: conceptual clarity, legitimisation and recognition; long-term directions; creating synergies; and coherence between actors to improve the quality of evaluation and learning. These strong arguments for a formal strategy have come from a national level within EU member states.

### **1. Conceptual Clarity**

Development education concepts are in steady evolution. While, for example, public relations might have been considered part of DEAR some years ago (and unfortunately still are for certain actors), there is today a consensus that DE is not concerned with charity, organisational publicity or public relations exercises (Multi-stakeholder group, 2007: 7). On the other hand, concepts like global learning, active global citizenship, education for sustainable development and DEAR as a global endeavour have evolved. The EU should be able to state clearly its concept of DEAR.

### **2. Legitimisation and Recognition**

Institutional recognition of DEAR as a policy field is crucial to ensure that DEAR policies are consistently delivered over the long term supported by the provision of organisational and financial resources.

### **3. Long-term Direction**

A strategy would allow the European Union to outline a long-term perspective for its DEAR activities, beyond the EC Annual Action Programmes of the Development Cooperation Instrument, which reduces DEAR to a minor activity within civil society ODA funding.

### **4. Creation of Synergies and Coherence between Actors**

While objective 2 of the EuropeAid NSA-LA programme is among the most important funding sources for DEAR, the scope of development education goes beyond ODA. For example, activities related to active global citizenship are already implemented through a range of EC programmes under Directorate General (DG) Education and Culture or DG Environment. A strategy would have the potential to operationalise cooperation between different EC services, but also clarify roles and complementarity with other non-EC actors such as member states and civil society, and possibly reinforce the role of the European Development Education Multi Stakeholder Process.

### **5. Quality, Evaluation and Learning**

A dedicated EU DEAR strategy, including evaluation procedures and an action plan, would allow for the systematic monitoring of the effectiveness and impact of actions and enhance organisational learning.

### **What Should the EU DEAR Strategy Look Like?**

A good basis for an EU strategy would be the European DE Consensus, in particular its sections on the role, principles, objectives and target groups of DEAR. The Consensus has been widely agreed, and it has been used as a reference document by a broad range of state- and non-state actors which is proof of its value. Building on this, the recommendations of the DEAR

study, and in particular its ‘core recommendations’, could form the more operational part of the strategy, particularly that concerning EuropeAid’s DEAR activities, but also beyond this particular budget line. It could outline the EU’s overall objective in development education, and clarify the following aspects in specific objectives, which are comprehensively treated in the DEAR study:

- Coherence and coordination, including synergies within the EC services and complementarity with member states, through a multi stakeholder mechanism (ideally based on the existing multi stakeholder process);
- Quality and learning, including monitoring, organisational learning and knowledge management;
- Global perspectives, including involvement of non-European actors and global initiatives in DEAR;
- Grants and administration, including general EC grant management, the introduction of mini grants, and structural support mechanisms;
- Management of DEAR within the EC, including staff roles and structures, role of grant assessors and information provision.

Clear indicators should be attributed to each specific objective. The strategy should cover a seven year period, accompanied by a three year action plan. After the first three years, a mid-term review of the strategy should take place and result in possible adjustments. The figure below outlines a possible structure for an EU DEAR strategy.

### **We Need the Strategy Now More Than Ever**

The Directorate General of Development and Cooperation (DG DEVCO) could raise awareness of the importance of DEAR in other DGs. Drafting an EU DEAR strategy should be a relatively straightforward task, as the DE Consensus and the DEAR Study could provide an excellent basis for this work as they already outline most of the elements needed. Such an EU development education strategy, based on an EC proposition (e.g. in the form of a communication) and formally discussed and endorsed by the European Parliament and the European Council, would be a milestone towards clear, systematic and ambitious development education policies in the European Union.

The DEAR strategy would have political added value if endorsed by the EU. Adopting such a strategy in the EU would give a stronger position for DEAR in the member states and could be incorporated into national education plans. The actors already working in the DEAR sector could strengthen their capacity and would get more legitimacy for their work. By adopting the strategy the EU could better support global civil society, enhance

coordination, provide fiscal support and strengthen capacity building and joint learning.

The good news is that things are already moving forward. Some Members of the European Parliaments (MEPs) took the initiative to table a 'written declaration on Development Education and Active Global Citizenship' in the European Parliament in early 2012 making a strong case for DEAR and calling for more ambitious and strategic DEAR policies (European Parliament, 2012). To be adopted, the declaration needed the signatures of at least 377 MEPs and ultimately secured the support of 398 (European Parliament, July 2012). With a majority of MEPs signing this text, it became automatically an official declaration of the European Parliament and will be forwarded to the Council, the Commission and all national parliaments in the EU. While the declaration does not have legal effects at the European level, it is crucial in the context of the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and Development Co-operation Instrument (DCI) negotiations, when it comes to setting up future instruments for development education. At member state level on the other hand, especially in countries where many MEPs signed the declaration, it showcases the need for reinforced national development education strategies. The increasing recognition of DEAR in the EU, which was augmented by the declaration, has also inspired the Library of the European Parliament to publish a library briefing on the matter (Library of the European Parliament, 2012).

The EC organised a follow-up meeting in May 2012 as a part of its ongoing structured dialogues with DEAR actors. The majority of participants concluded that the EC should take a more active role on DEAR and stressed the importance of those member states that currently do not offer financial support for civil society organisations (CSOs) to start delivering DEAR projects. Also the EC can support information sharing and build the capacities of project implementers. But a final decision from the EC side has yet to be taken. The European Commission should participate in the European DE multi-stakeholder group as many actors see this as an open and neutral environment to discuss DEAR. This gives many different stakeholders the possibility to be heard on a level playing field. The European DE multi-stakeholder group shares best practices, new innovative ideas and visions for the future.

With the future in mind, one should also not forget that the planning of a post-Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) development framework is under way and DEAR could open a new direction for the negotiations on the education goals. Consultations on this post-2015 framework provides DEAR actors with an opportunity to emphasise the importance of development education and awareness raising in generating public support for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that will follow the MDGs.

## References

Council of the European Union (2001) 'Council Resolution on development education and raising European public awareness of development cooperation', Brussels: Council of the European Union.

Council of the European Union (2005) 'The European Consensus', available: [http://www.fp7.org.tr/tubitak\\_content\\_files/268/dokumanlar/eu-consensus-development.pdf](http://www.fp7.org.tr/tubitak_content_files/268/dokumanlar/eu-consensus-development.pdf) (accessed 24 July 2012).

European Commission (2008) 'General Evaluation of Actions to Raise Public Awareness of Development Issues in Europe / Development Education EC', available: [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/civil-society/documents/dear\\_evaluation2008.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/civil-society/documents/dear_evaluation2008.pdf) (accessed 24 July 2012).

European Commission (2010) 'DEAR in Europe -Recommendations for future interventions by the European Commission', available: [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/images/d/d4/Final\\_Report\\_DEAR\\_Study.pdf](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/images/d/d4/Final_Report_DEAR_Study.pdf) (accessed 24 July 2012).

European NGO confederation for relief and development, CONCORD (2009), CONCORD Strategic Plan 2009-2015, Brussels: CONCORD.

European Parliament (2008) Resolution on the Challenge of EU Development Cooperation Policy for the New Member States, (P6\_TA(2008)0097),

European Parliament (2009) Resolution on the draft Commission decision establishing the 2009 Annual Action Programme for Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development, (P6\_TA(2009)0358), Brussels: European Parliament.

European Parliament (2010) Resolution on key competences for a changing world: implementation of the Education and Training 2010 work programme, (P7\_TA(2010)0164), Brussels: European Parliament.

European Parliament (2012) 'Written Declaration pursuant to Rule 123 of the Rules of Procedure on development education and active global citizenship', available: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+WDECL+P7-DCL-2012-0007+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN> (accessed 24 July 2012).

European Parliament (2012) Text of written declaration on 'Development Education and Active Global Citizenship', adopted on 5 July 2012, available: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7\\_TA\(2012\)0302&language=EN](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7_TA(2012)0302&language=EN) (accessed 24 July 2012).

IPAD (Instituto Portugues de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento) (2010) National Strategy for Development Education, available:

<http://www.ipad.mne.gov.pt/SociedadeCivil/educacaodesenvolvimento/EstrategiaNacionalENED/Documents/ENED%20EN.pdf> (accessed 24 July 2012).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (2011) 'National Strategy for Global Development Education 2011-2015', available:

[http://www.mzv.cz/public/60/2b/90/612337\\_522538\\_National\\_Strategy\\_for\\_Global\\_Development\\_Education\\_2011\\_2015.pdf](http://www.mzv.cz/public/60/2b/90/612337_522538_National_Strategy_for_Global_Development_Education_2011_2015.pdf) (accessed 24 July 2012).

Multi-stakeholder group (2007) 'The European Consensus on Development: The contribution of Development Education & Awareness Raising', available: [http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/PUBLICATION\\_CONSENSUS\\_EN-067-00-00.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/PUBLICATION_CONSENSUS_EN-067-00-00.pdf) (accessed 24 July 2012).

North-South Centre of the Council of Europe (2002) 'Global Education in Europe to 2015 – Strategy, policies, and perspectives', available:

[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/nscentre/Resources/Publications/GE\\_Maastricht\\_Nov2002.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/nscentre/Resources/Publications/GE_Maastricht_Nov2002.pdf) (accessed 24 July 2012).

## RIISING TO THE CHALLENGE: DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION, NGOs AND THE URGENT NEED FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Stephen McCloskey

### Introduction

Social change is the *raison d'être* of the development education (DE) sector. It aims to eradicate social and economic inequalities through a process of learning that supports action as summarised in the following definition from the European DEEEP project: 'It enables people to move from basic awareness of international development priorities and sustainable human development, through understanding of the causes and effects of global issues to personal involvement and informed actions' (DARE Forum, 2004). This is a widely shared approach to development education which also extends to governments. For example, Irish Aid suggests that development education 'seeks to engage people in analysis, reflection and action for local and global citizenship and participation' (Irish Aid, 2006). This article aims to discuss the role of development organisations in effecting social change primarily by reference to the sectors in Ireland and Britain. It argues that the sector has limited engagement with social movements which share many of the values and social vision of development education and could potentially widen its impact on society. A stronger and more radical social base could enable development education to initiate dialogical discussion on issues pivotal to our future such as sustainability in the context of the prevailing model of growth.

This article will argue the case for a more rounded and substantial engagement with development education within the development sector itself by examining the deficits of the Make Poverty History (MPH) campaign in 2005 and missed opportunities arising from the recent financial crisis in Ireland. The article will begin by examining the outcomes of recent research on development education and overseas aid which suggests that cosmetic engagement with development issues, as appeared to be the case for example with Make Poverty History, results in short-term public mobilisation and disappointing outcomes. It is argued that a more radical approach to campaigning that embraces the reflective practice of development education could generate a more meaningful and fruitful engagement with the public. It goes on to suggest that the reluctance of many key constituents in the development sector to engage in the debate around Ireland's recent financial collapse and loss of economic sovereignty represented a missed opportunity to educate the public about fundamental aspects of development. It arguably undermined the sector's credibility as a critical voice in the non-governmental sector and represented a derogation of development education's role as an agent of *local* as well as global development.

The article concludes that more sustained public engagement with development issues could be generated through stronger links with social movements and a more radical agenda. The sector could become a more vital component of civil society by connecting the local to the global.

### **Shallow Public Engagement with Development**

In a briefing on engaging the public in tackling global poverty in Britain, the Think Global (formerly the Development Education Association) and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) suggest 'that public support for development, whilst still widespread, is shallow and that public opinion is increasingly polarised on this issue' (October 2010). Hudson and van Heerde have questioned the assumption that there is an 'overwhelming level of public support for the principle of aid to poor countries'. In fact, they argue that the causal link between public support and development aid 'does not enjoy empirical support from available data' (2010: 20). Hudson and van Heerde have found that the level of engagement with development in Britain is 'a mile wide and an inch deep' which supports the notion that public knowledge of development lacks the complexity and depth required to engage sustainably with the issues underpinning global poverty. This shallow public engagement with development arguably found its most visible expression in the Make Poverty History campaign and its related events in 2005.

On 2 July 2005, 220,000 protestors convened in Edinburgh as part of a series of events organised as part of MPH, a coalition of charities, civil society groups, and faith organisations formed to campaign on key global issues like debt and poverty eradication. The Edinburgh protest coincided with a Group of 8 leading industrialised countries summit held twenty miles away in Gleneagles. As the protestors completed walking laps of Edinburgh city centre shouting slogans in an upbeat atmosphere, the level of mobilisation was impressive but the outcomes questionable. While big promises were made at Gleneagles including a \$50 billion aid package to Africa, they were subsequently not delivered upon. Among the development agency responses to the Gleneagles summit: the World Development Movement described it as 'a disaster for the world's poor'; ActionAid complained that 'the G8 have completely failed to deliver trade justice'; Christian Aid described the summit as 'a sad day for poor people in Africa and all over the world'; and Oxfam lamented that 'neither the necessary sense of urgency nor the historic potential of Gleneagles was grasped by the G8' (*Guardian*, 6 September 2005).

Make Poverty History succeeded on the level of clearly communicating the need for change and highlighting some of the key issues that needed addressing but it failed in sustaining the participation of the hundreds of thousands who donned the white wristbands and took to the streets. A Eurobarometer poll in 2005 showed that despite the enhanced media coverage and increased public awareness of global poverty generated by

Make Poverty History, Live8 concerts, and Gleneagles Summit, a total of 88 percent of EU citizens cited no knowledge of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Eurobarometer, 2005). The MDGs are the central plank of development policy for the world's leading industrialised countries and the low level of public awareness of the goals reflected in this poll suggests that development organisations and governments alike have been largely unsuccessful in capturing civil society involvement in achieving the targets.

A Department for International Development (DfID)-commissioned poll in 2010 measuring public (adults over 16 years) attitudes to development showed that the proportion of the public who are very concerned about global poverty had declined from a peak of 32 percent around the time of Make Poverty History to 25 percent five years later. The percentage of the public describing themselves as 'active enthusiasts' in the area of international development declined from 18 percent in 2008 to 14 percent in 2010 while, in the same period, the percentage of respondents who thought 'most aid is wasted' increased from 47 percent to 53 percent. The percentage of respondents concerned about global poverty remained solidly high (74 percent in 2008 and 73 percent in 2010) which suggested that the public lack the knowledge and understanding of international development to meaningfully address relevant issues and move from a position of concern to one of individual or communal action (TNS, 2010).

Make Poverty History appeared to be an example of what Freire (1972) described as pure activism (action without reflection) rather than the more sustained engagement with the learner inherent in praxis (reflection *and* action) which had the power 'to negate accepted limits and open the way to a new future' (Ibid.:11). Key questions arising from the recent surveys on public attitudes to development are how to engage civil society at the kind of level likely to result in dialogical action, and what role development NGOs can play in this process?

### **The Irish Financial Crisis - Where was the Development Sector?**

Bebbington et al. suggest that 'NGOs are only NGOs in any politically meaningful sense of the term if they are offering alternatives to dominant models, practices and ideas about development' (2008: 3). This more politically-oriented role is problematic for many NGOs, particularly in the development sector where they tend to focus on the domestic policy arena only insofar as it impacts on overseas aid and development policy. Economic policy-making and social development in the national context is largely devolved to NGOs with a local or specialist focus in the domestic arena. However, the 2008 global financial crisis and the subsequent sharp contraction of the Irish economy resulting in an €85 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and European Central Bank (ECB) shows how the national and global frequently collide (*Irish Times*, 28 November 2010). For example, the

same economic mismanagement that cost the Irish taxpayer between €29 and €34 billion to bail out Anglo Irish Bank (*Guardian*, 30 September 2010), also resulted in cuts totaling €224 million from the overseas aid budget in 2009 (Dochas, 10 December 2009).

While the development sector launched a campaign to engage public support for the aid budget and prevent further cuts ([www.actnow2015.ie](http://www.actnow2015.ie)), it has stopped short of locating the cuts within the wider economic malaise impacting on Irish society. To critique the cuts in aid without analysing and attempting to address the underlying social, economic and political crisis underpinning those cuts severely limits the role of NGOs as critical friends of government and active agents of social equality at home and overseas. Bebbington et al. believe that:

“NGOs can and must re-engage with the project of seeking alternative development futures for the world’s poorest and more marginal. This will require clearer analysis of the contemporary problems of uneven development, and a clear understanding of the types of alliances NGOs need to construct with other actors in civil society if they are to mount a credible challenge to disempowering processes of economic, social and political development” (2008: 3).

One of the lessons of Make Poverty History is that the alliance of civil society movements involved in the campaign lacked a development education component that could have supported a more critical analysis of the issues tackled by MPH. Similarly, development education organisations with the capacity to provide critical literacy skills and a deeper understanding of development did not sufficiently engage with the campaign and its mobilisation of the public.

However, there is a striking example of an organisation that attempted to connect the current economic crisis in Ireland to the global South. In December 2010, Action from Ireland (Afri) published a paper on the IMF’s intervention in Ireland ‘based on the experience of global justice organisations that have long monitored the impact of IMF policies in the Global South’. The paper argued that the IMF deal ‘[L]ocks Ireland into a very specific neo-liberal economic model dominated by policies which impose suffering on the less well off in Irish society’. Drawing upon examples of the IMF’s – arguably disastrous – interventions in the global South, the paper argued for a defaulting on the bank debt, ‘an option that it is imperative be exercised on the grounds of both justice and economic sustainability’ (Afri, 2010). Thus, Afri squarely addressed a fundamental and momentous generational question for the Irish people based on compelling evidence from the global South.

It is regrettable that key constituents in the development sector remained silent on Ireland's financial problems and refused to engage in the debate that enveloped Irish civil society. Here was an opportunity to mobilise stakeholders at a grassroots level against the IMF/ECB loan and educate the public on alternative economic models drawing upon the sector's links with the global South. Rarely has the local been so clearly intertwined with the global in an issue that impacted on all of us and beckoned a contribution from development organisations and development educators. This required the sector to leave the more comfortable terrain of commentary on the global to become more visibly and actively engaged with the local and it largely refused to do so. As Storey suggests: 'if an opportunity for education *from* the South is being lost here then so also is an opportunity to learn *about* the South' given that the Irish people are confronting similar processes of structural adjustment to those faced by many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America (2011). The sector could, for example, have shared the experiences of Argentina at the start of the last decade when popular resistance to an IMF lending programme and its resulting austerity measures forced a partial defaulting on its debt which helped to set the country on the path toward economic recovery (Ibid).

Alas, the Irish development sector, with honourable exceptions, missed this opportunity to bring global experiences to bear on a local issue of far-reaching consequences which begs the question why are development organisations so reluctant to enter the political fray at a domestic level beyond the area of international development?

### **Ducking the Domestic Agenda**

The Irish development sector has yet to open the kind of debate proposed by Bebbington et al. on 'alternative development futures' rooted in sustainability and driven by social needs rather than a high-growth, neoliberal ideology. And yet the development sector has considerable public support which could provide a platform for meaningful debate on alternative futures in Ireland informed by a global perspective. According to a 2006 Dóchas survey of its members there are 854,613 supporters of its development sector affiliates, 77 percent of which are drawn from the 'general public'. If this substantial section of civil society could be engaged in development education activities linking the local to the global then it would undoubtedly enhance active citizenship on development issues and strengthen public support for positive interventions in the global South. However, for the most part, development organisations only engage in the domestic political arena when it addresses policy issues directly related to the area of international development. Thus, local development issues with a firm global connection like the economy, unemployment, asylum-seekers and refugees, and migration are deemed off the radar of key development constituents. So, why is there reluctance among development organisations to intervene in the public debate on issues to

which they could usefully contribute?

Part of the answer lies in how development NGOs are funded, particularly in the development sector where the larger development agencies have traditionally acted as government partners in delivering aid programmes in the global South. For example, the 2009 Irish Aid Annual Report stated that '[a]pproximately one third of Ireland's bilateral ODA (Overseas Development Assistance) was delivered through non-governmental organisations' (2009: 66) with Ireland's total aid budget in 2009 amounting to €722.2 million. These NGO partners include overseas agencies but five Irish NGOs alone - Christian Aid, Concern, GOAL, Self Help Africa, and Trócaire - received core programme support in 2009 totaling more than €56 million (Irish Aid, 2009: 46). This is not to critique development organisations for working in partnership with government or to criticise Irish Aid for disbursing aid through NGOs; we need a well-resourced aid sector and a government committed to international development. However, the relationship between the NGO and government sectors goes beyond that of donor and aid partner to, for example, joint missions to multilateral development gatherings which can arguably result in a blurring of roles, policies and agendas. When the stakes are so high in terms of financial support, policy formation and government access, development organisations may be reluctant to overtly criticise government policy, particularly in areas beyond international development.

Similarly, the development education sector is highly dependent on Irish Aid as development agency support for the sector has weakened. In total, Irish Aid expenditure on development education in 2009 was over €5 million which is high relative to other Western European states (2009: 58). A trend in development education since the mid-1990s in Britain and Ireland has seen a reduction in support for development education from the NGO sector as government support has increased. This has resulted in traditionally small development education organisations becoming increasingly vulnerable to changes in government policy like, for instance, the decision by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID) to reduce its grant support for development education following the May 2010 election (DfID, 17 May; 2 July 2010). In such a government-dominated funding environment it is possible that some development education practitioners may either tailor their programmes to correspond with official development agendas or avoid tackling controversial issues that could possibly antagonise official funders.

Other factors that may explain why development organisations are reluctant to intervene in domestic policy matters includes the suggestion by some that 'NGOs can be more accurately seen as corporate entities acting according to the logic of the marketplace, albeit a marketplace in service provision' (Bebbington, et al.: 6). As larger corporate entities they may have a stronger orientation toward fundraising and campaigns than education

and a more international rather than local policy focus. There is also the question of public support and the perceived danger that adopting an overtly political role in domestic affairs which courts controversy may result in reduced donations and public goodwill. On the other hand, it is arguable that development organisations could augment their public support and strengthen their connection with local communities by speaking to domestic issues which have a strong global resonance. This is certainly an area of activity that development organisations could usefully reflect upon particularly in the context of Ireland's worsening social and economic performance as outlined in the next section.

### **Under-development in Ireland: The Case for Local Interventions by the Development Sector**

Ireland is a society ill-at-ease with itself as evidenced by public concern at the sweep of cuts resulting from the state's lending to banks and acceptance of an €85 billion loan from the IMF and ECB. Commentators and readers alike have vented their anger on the pages of the *Irish Times* at the 'surrender' of Irish sovereignty and loss of political credibility and independence of action (18 & 19 November 2010). Around 50,000 people attended a public rally opposing the cuts organised by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions on 27 November 2010 in one of the largest demonstrations seen in the capital for many years (*Irish Times*) in addition to smaller but significant rallies by nurses, pensioners and other sectors of civil society targeted by austerity measures.

Since 2008, Ireland has been experiencing indicators of social under-development most recently associated with the economically stagnant 1980s when high unemployment forced many young people to emigrate to more buoyant economies overseas. There are currently 439,200 people claiming unemployment benefits in Ireland, some 13.7 percent of the population (up from 3.7 per cent in 2000) which in turn has pushed up the number of emigrants estimated at 100,000 between April 2010 and April 2012. In the area of education, there are worrying indicators of social polarisation and under-achievement with 24 percent of 15 year olds 'effectively illiterate' and Ireland slumping to 17<sup>th</sup> position on the world's international league table on literacy and 30<sup>th</sup> (out of 34) on the league table on education spending. Statistics in the area of health are equally worrying with 47,587 patients waiting for elective procedures and €1.4 billion slashed from the health budget from 2011-2014 (*Irish Times*, 12 February 2011).

These statistics indicate a deeper, long-term malaise in the Irish economy, political system and wider society resulting from the more prominent role of the market in public life. In considering the impact of neoliberalism on education both locally and internationally, the Irish National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) identified three key features in the external environment that impacted on its work: 'globalisation, marketisation

and individualisation'. It added that '[t]he influence of the market has also been keenly felt in higher education, where individual schools and departments of universities are increasingly viewed as the components of an internal competitive market'. As a result of accelerated globalisation, education in liberal democracies is becoming increasingly commodified and a significant outcome of this process is the 'trend of individualisation' and 'the atomisation of the individual in an increasingly consumerised and consumer-led world' (NCCA Strategic Plan, 2006-08: 11-13).

This increasing commodification of the education system and other vital public services like health and utilities combined with the economic turmoil already besieging Irish society demands social change that extends beyond the current tried and failed model of untrammelled neoliberalism. In order to engage in this debate both within the development sector and with social partners, development NGOs need to adopt a more overtly political role in society and align themselves more strategically with civil society groups that share their vision for a more egalitarian and just society. In assessing their findings on public attitudes to development and the role of NGOs, Hudson and van Heerde pose this question:

"Should building support for development seek to work through accommodating existing policy preferences or aim to actively shape preferences? The answer to this will depend upon what the true goal of a communication and public awareness strategy is: whether it is to maximize support for poverty alleviation or to foster critical civic engagement with poverty alleviation itself" (2010: 22-23).

The current financial crisis in Ireland and erosion of public trust in political institutions as a means toward equitable social change demands that development organisations raise their voices in the debate on how we move forward as a society. Development education is particularly well positioned to contribute to this debate given its local-global axis as outlined in the aforementioned Irish Aid definition which regards DE as supporting 'reflection and action for *local* and global citizenship and participation'. The local component of development education practice involves drawing upon the learner's experiences in the local community and relating those experiences to wider concepts of social and economic development. The next section offers some proposals as to how development education and the wider development sector can contribute to this debate on social change.

### **How Do We Rise to the Challenge of Urgent Social Change?**

Firstly, development organisations of all stripes need to establish meaningful partnerships with the civil society organisations that represent the poor, marginalised and disempowered within Ireland as well as overseas. By

creating new horizontal coalitions and alliances, development organisations can operate with renewed credibility and energy. Far too often development educators debate issues among themselves, rather than engaging with wider society and in the current social and economic context we no longer have that luxury. Trade unions, community groups, minority ethnic organisations, unemployed groups and campaigning organisations like social movements and human rights groups all represent potential partners of the development education sector. These horizontal rather than vertical alliances represent the natural constituency of development education.

Secondly, development educators need to become more proactively and overtly political in their operations. For the majority of development organisations political advocacy begins and ends with international development policy and how it is resourced. The development sector, for the most part, does not address domestic policy issues or consider the relationship between Ireland's national growth strategy and the well-being of Irish society as well as overseas aid. The cuts in overseas aid are on the same continuum as other reductions in government expenditure which are severely impacting on the poor in Ireland. The development sector has a large public base that could be mobilised in support of a domestic social agenda rooted in justice and equality and informed by a global perspective.

Thirdly, the development education sector needs to formulate its own agenda for change based on debate among practitioners and with social partners. The sector has traditionally operated within the strategic priorities of funders and statutory education bodies rather than identifying its own priorities for social change. A national development education strategy plan that has buy-in and support from the wider development sector and grassroots social movements, could enable the sector to chart its own course to development based on its strengths as a practitioner of education toward social change.

Fourthly, Irish development organisations need to immediately engage in a process of imagining and cultivating alternative futures that can steer our society toward a more sustainable model of development imbued with the kind of values and community ethos that has been lost over the last two decades. As the NCCA suggests:

“In Ireland, the traditional family and the role of the family within a community are changing. The tradition of individuals volunteering to participate in initiatives for the benefit of the local community appears to be in decline, as this time is increasingly devoted to children and family and activities that directly benefit my family and my children” (NCCA, 2006: 13).

In considering how the formulation of alternative futures might work, Bebbington et al. believe NGOs should reach out:

“far more assertively, open-mindedly, but also critically to social movements. Indeed the imperative seems to be for NGOs to think consciously of themselves as part of a social movement in which the different constituents are equally important, and therefore in which relationships of power have to be thoroughly re-worked and made more horizontal” (2008: 32).

Fifthly, the leading development agencies need to re-engage with development education both internally and externally by way of financial support to and policy support for the wider sector. A more independent financial base is imperative for the long-term sustainability of the sector and development agency support is necessary if development education is to be delivered to new audiences and social partners. Finally, and connected to the previous points, is the need for development education to formulate its thinking and positions on the key global issues impacting on our lives.

In a seminar on climate change for the Centre for Global Education (2010), David Selby posed some challenging questions for development education practitioners: is the sector critical enough of economic growth and its effects? Is development education offering a sufficiently root and branch critique of consumerism? Is development education helping to break through the cognitive dissonance surrounding what is happening to the planet whereby we acknowledge the threat posed by climate change but prevaricate from responding accordingly? Development education needs to place its focus on debating these questions and considering the role it wants to play in moving society towards a more sustainable and equitable future.

## Conclusion

Recent surveys and polls commissioned by development organisations in Britain suggest that support for overseas aid is weakening and the level of public knowledge of development issues is ‘a mile wide and an inch deep’. The Make Poverty History initiative was extremely successful in mobilising the public for actions on development issues but unsuccessful in sustaining their engagement with global poverty over the long-term. The MPH example suggests that social movements and development education practitioners have a mutual need for support and collaboration to ensure that the public have the requisite depth of learning and skills needed to engage in meaningful actions on development issues.

The development sector needs to rise to the challenge of the global financial crisis and its impact on the Irish economy together with the festering undercurrents of social inequality. The sector has an opportunity to apply its global learning to local problems based on new partnerships with grassroots social movements. The sector can no longer afford to limit interventions in local policy-making to overseas development issues. Building social

partnerships in civil society that help to address domestic deficits in social and economic development will also enable development organisations in Ireland to strengthen public support for overseas development.

In *The Spirit Level*, Wilkinson and Pickett suggest that mainstream politics 'has abandoned the attempt to provide a shared vision capable of inspiring us to create a better society' (2010: 4). Development organisations in Ireland now have a significant opportunity to move beyond their traditional terrain and intervene more overtly in domestic policy issues to build a better society in Ireland and, at the same time, build support for development overseas.

## References

Afri (2010) 'IMF and Ireland: What we can learn from the Global South', December 2010, available: [http://www.dublinopinion.com/downloads/Afri\\_Report\\_on\\_EU\\_IMF\\_Loan\\_Deal.pdf](http://www.dublinopinion.com/downloads/Afri_Report_on_EU_IMF_Loan_Deal.pdf), (accessed 20 January 2011).

Bebbington, A, Hickey, S & Mitlin, D (2008) 'Introduction: Can NGOs Make a Difference? The Challenge of Development Alternatives' in A Bebbington, S Hickey & D Mitlin, D (eds.) *Can NGOs Make a Difference? The Challenge of Development Alternatives*, London: Zed Books.

Department for International Development (2010) 'Freeze on UK-based awareness projects', Press Release, DfID, available: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Media-Room/News-Stories/2010/Mitchell-Immediate-freeze-on-DFID-UK-based-awareness-projects/>, (accessed 20 January 2011).

Department for International Development (2010) 'Cost saving measures to boost help for world's poor', Press Release, DfID, 2 July 2010, available:

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Media-Room/News-Stories/2010/Mitchell-announces-cost-saving-measures-to-boost-help-for-worlds-poor/>, (accessed 20 January 2011).

Department for International Development (2010) Public Attitudes Towards Development, Department for International Development (DFID), TNS, 2010, available: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/About-DFID/Finance-and-performance/Public-opinion-research/>, (accessed 20 January 2011).

Development Awareness Raising and Education Forum (2004) Website, available: <http://www.deeep.org/dareforum.html>, (accessed 16 January 2011).

Dóchas (2006) Membership information based on a 2006 survey, available: <http://www.dochas.ie/members/templates/supporters.htm>, (accessed 12 December 2010).

Dóchas (2011) 'Wednesday's News', 26 January 2011 & 9 February 2011, Dublin: Dóchas.

Eurobarometer (2005) 'Europeans and Development Aid, 222 EB62.2', Brussels: European Commission, available: [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_222\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_222_en.pdf), (accessed 6 December 2010).

DEEEP (2010) European Development Education Monitoring Report, 'DE Watch' published by the European Multi-Stakeholder Group on Development Education, Brussels: DEEEP, available: [http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR\\_2010\\_EN\\_Overview\\_reprint.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2010_EN_Overview_reprint.pdf), (accessed 15 December 2010).

Freire, P (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, London: Penguin Books.

Hudson, D & van Heerde, J (2009) 'A mile wide and an inch deep: Surveys on Public Attitudes towards Development Aid', available: <http://davidhudson.files.wordpress.com/2009/03/hudson-van-heerde-mile-wide-inch-deep-17-feb-2010.pdf>, (accessed 12 December 2010).

Irish Aid (2006) 'Irish Aid and Development Education', Irish Aid, Limerick, available: <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/Uploads/Irish%20Aid%20and%20Development%20Education.pdf>, (accessed 15 December 2010).

Irish Aid (2009) *Annual Report 2009: Focus on Poverty and Hunger*, Limerick: Irish Aid.

*Irish Times* (2010) 'Was it for this?', 18 November 2010.

*Irish Times* (2010) Letters to the Editor, 'Was it for this? The State of the Nation', 19 November 2010.

*Irish Times* (2010) '50,000 march against budget cuts', 27 November 2010.

*Irish Times* (2010) 'Society is more than its scapegoats', 29 December 2010.

*Irish Times*, 12 February 2011.

Klein, N (2008) *The Shock Doctrine*, London: Allen Lane.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (2006) Strategic Plan 2006-08, available: <http://www.ncca.ie/uploadedfiles/publications/strat%20plan%20EN%2006-08.pdf>, (accessed 6 December 2010).

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2011) 'Statistical profile of Ireland', accessed 8 January 2011, available: [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/country-statistical-profile-ireland\\_20752288-table-irl](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/country-statistical-profile-ireland_20752288-table-irl), (accessed 6 December 2010).

Pickett, K & Wilkinson, R (2010) *The Spirit Level: why equality is better for everyone*, London: Penguin.

Selby, D (2010) 'What Climate Change Brings to the Development Education Agenda', Report on a seminar held on 23 November 2010 in The Junction, Derry, Centre for Global Education.

Storey, A (2011) 'One World: why Irish development educators should court controversy at home' in *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring 2011.

*The Guardian*, 30 September 2010.

*The Observer* (2010) 'Ireland's leaders have betrayed their country', 21 November 2010.

Think Global and Institute of Development Studies (2010) 'Engaging the public in tackling global poverty, A briefing for international development sector leaders', October 2010, Think Global: London.

United Nations Development Programme (2010) *Human Development Report 2010*, accessed 9 January 2011, available: [http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR\\_2010\\_EN\\_Overview\\_reprint.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2010_EN_Overview_reprint.pdf), (accessed 9 January 2011).

United Nations Human Development Index (2011), available: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/hdi/>, (accessed 9 January 2011).

## ONE WORLD: WHY IRISH DEVELOPMENT EDUCATORS SHOULD COURT CONTROVERSY AT HOME

Andy Storey

“Egypt Supports Wisconsin: One World, One Pain” – placard carried by a protestor in Tahrir Square, Cairo (<http://www.alternet.org>, 19th February 2011).

### Introduction

Action from Ireland (Afri) each year holds a ‘famine walk’ in Mayo that seeks to highlight issues concerning global justice and poverty. Willie Corduff – a prominent protestor against the Shell-led Corrib Gas project (also in Mayo) – was one of the walk leaders in 2009. In the promotional literature for the walk, Afri highlighted what it saw as parallels between the Corrib Gas situation and Shell’s activities in the Niger Delta. In particular, it drew what seemed a legitimate comparison between state and corporate abuse of Willie Corduff (he has been both imprisoned and beaten up for his non-violent opposition to the Corrib Gas project; see Siggins, 2010) and the treatment meted out to the late Ken Saro Wiwa (executed by the Nigerian state for his opposition to Shell’s activities). Afri’s position was – and is – that such comparative analysis is good practice in development education because it allows people based in Ireland to better understand, and empathise with, the realities of the global South. When people are able to identify similar processes at work ‘at home’, the issue becomes more real and less abstract, no longer something that is happening ‘out there’. Furthermore, it facilitates a more equal learning process: rather than seeing the global South as helpless and in need of Western knowledge and help, such approaches open up the possibility that the South might have something to teach the West – for example, on resistance to corporate resource exploitation.

However, another development organisation objected to the comparison, seeing the situations in the Niger Delta and surrounding Corrib Gas as qualitatively different in scale and seriousness (and that is true to some extent – for example, no one has yet died because of this conflict in Mayo). But the objection also centred on the validity of a development education group addressing ‘local’ issues, especially issues relating to Irish government policy. And yet this objection is not evenly raised. The previous year, the famine walk had been led by campaigners calling for a ban on cluster munitions – an issue that also concerned Irish government policy – the difference being that on this occasion the Irish government *supported* the campaign; no objection was raised. Many questions are begged by these events, but the issue I wish to focus on in this short article is that an opportunity is being lost from a development education perspective when issues of struggle, conflict and

opposition in Ireland are excised (or an attempt is made to excise them) from the Irish development education agenda. Nowhere is this now more apparent than on issues of debt and economic austerity.

### **Debt and Structural Adjustment**

For many years, Irish development non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have highlighted issues surrounding ‘Third World’ debt and International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank structural adjustment, including the erosion of sovereignty in the global South and the devastating socio-economic consequences to name a few. When the IMF arrived in Ireland in late 2010, it therefore seemed obvious (to Afri at least, and to some other individuals) that the development sector was well placed to provide some analysis and critique of the IMF (and European Union (EU)) programme. This seemed to be especially the case given the striking parallels between some of the more controversial IMF operations in the global South and the Irish intervention.

Specifically, Ajai Chopra, the head of the IMF team negotiating the Irish ‘bail out’, previously worked in the IMF’s Asia-Pacific department and led its ‘rescue’ mission to South Korea after a financial collapse in 1997. In South Korea, state interventions were curtailed and the government budget was slashed (leading to massive redundancies), despite the fact that government overspending had nothing to do with the Korean crisis. Between 1996 and 1999, South Korea’s unemployment rate tripled and the proportion of the population identifying themselves as middle-class fell from 64 percent to 38 percent (Klein, 2007: 272). Korean trade unions and other forces opposed these policies but they were quickly assured that their opposition would count for nothing, as documented by Naomi Klein:

“the end of the IMF negotiations coincided with scheduled presidential elections in which two of the candidates were running on anti-IMF platforms. In an extraordinary act of interference with a sovereign nation’s political process, the IMF refused to release the money until it had commitments from all four main candidates that they would stick to the new [IMF] rules if they won. With the country effectively held at ransom, the IMF was triumphant: each candidate pledged his support in writing...[Y]ou can vote, South Koreans were told, but your vote can have no bearing on the managing and organisation of the economy” (Klein, 2007: 270).

The similarity with the situation in Ireland is evident, with figures such as EU Commissioner Olli Rehn and European Central Bank president Jean-Claude Trichet insisting that whatever new government the Irish people elected it would still have to implement the previously agreed economic plan. And yet, with exceptions (Afri, 2010), it is not the development or global justice

sectors in Ireland that have highlighted the tension between the claimed commitment to democracy and the denial of democratic choice regarding the economy. It has been left to writers such as Fintan O'Toole (2011) to make the point:

"The coalition parties interpret the 'democratic revolution' of February 25th as a popular mandate for a radical renegotiation of the EU-IMF deal. They believe this mandate includes a revulsion against the basic inequity of shovelling billions into the banks while increasing child poverty. But they have effectively nothing to say about how they will implement that mandate. The first two years of the existing fiscal strategy will continue, with no notion of what happens then. The transfer of public resources into the banks will be postponed until after the current stress tests – which are likely to lead to a demand for more, not less, cash. What we're promised, then, is a great new surge of power to the people, with one small condition – that they don't use it in areas such as the economy, fiscal policy or social justice" (O'Toole, 2011).

It should surely be those organisations who have long been monitoring such situations in South Korea and elsewhere that would have been best placed to draw attention to such matters and help Irish people understand what is happening to them. Instead, a representative of an Irish development NGO told a (private) meeting on the issue that 'I don't think the IMF in Ireland is the same as the IMF in developing countries'. If an opportunity for education *from* the South is being lost here, then so also is an opportunity for education *about* the South. A perennial problem facing development educators is the difficulty of getting Irish people to place themselves in the shoes of those in Africa, Asia and Latin America, to make the imaginative leap necessary to truly understand their situations. The fact that similar processes of structural adjustment are occurring now in Ireland should surely allow that leap to be more easily made. Conversely, ignoring what is happening in Ireland and interpreting one's mandate as to exclusively focus only on the South is to pass up a massive opportunity to better educate Irish people on global justice issues.

### **Learning about Resistance**

To return to the theme of integrating the 'local' and the 'global' in such a way as to open up a more equal learning process through which the South might have something to teach the West, the current crisis is also an opportunity – especially with respect to innovative strategies of resistance to economic austerity. For example, the process whereby democratically organised projects of popular power forced the Argentinian government to default on part of its debt in the early 2000s is one that could prove highly instructive for Irish people (Sitrin, 2006). At a time when Irish civil society remains strangely

quiescent about the costs being imposed upon them by debt repayment, such examples of successful resistance might prove invaluable. The Latin American Solidarity Centre has been drawing attention to these parallels, but few others in the Irish development sector have attempted to do the same.

Another such parallel concerns debt audits, which have been used across the global South to allow civil society to hold to account those responsible for the damage caused by their countries' indebtedness. The example of Ecuador is perhaps most striking here (McWilliams, 2011). In 2007, Ecuador's President Correa established a debt audit commission, which reported in 2008 that a portion of the country's debt was 'illegitimate' and had done 'incalculable damage' to Ecuador's people and environment. Ecuador then defaulted on the 'toxic' (illegitimate) portion of its debt. Despite predictions of economic disaster, the country registered 3.7 percent economic growth in 2010 and the forecast is for growth in excess of 5.1 percent growth in 2011. Indeed, there is now strong demand for Ecuadorean bonds again which means that the country can access the international financial markets despite a repudiation of its past debt. The salience of this example for current public debates in Ireland is glaringly obvious and the ability of development organisations to bring that experience into the domestic discourse equally obvious, and yet, for the most part, it is happening in only a very marginal way (Storey, 2011).

A call for a debt audit *has* happened in Greece. As one of the organisers of that call puts it:

"Can we be certain that the bulk of Greek public debt is legal, given especially that it has been contracted in direct contravention of EU treaties which state that public debt must not exceed 60% of GDP? The creditors - mostly core European banks - were fully aware of flouting this legal requirement when they lent to the Greek state. Is Irish public debt legitimate, given that much of it is speculative bank lending with a public tag placed on it? Is debt in both countries ethically and morally sustainable if servicing it implies the destruction of normal social life?" (Lapavistas, 2011).

A number of prominent Irish academics, writers and activists have backed the call to audit Greece's debt, and there have been suggestions that such an audit might also be required in Ireland (*Irish Times*, 4 March 2011). Development organisations that have monitored, or even participated, in such audits in the global South are surely ideally placed to lead such an initiative. They would thereby place themselves at the heart of debates on public policy in Ireland, could simultaneously raise awareness among Irish people of the lived realities - the setbacks and the victories - of people in the global South.

## Conclusion

This article began with an account of an NGO being chastised for tackling a 'divisive' issue in Ireland. But it is precisely when such issues are tackled - and precisely because they are 'cutting edge' and conflictual - that the greatest space is opened up for real development education. By integrating such 'local' perspectives into development education and advocacy work, opportunities are created to truly educate Irish people about what people in the global South are going through (precisely because it is not that dissimilar to what they themselves are experiencing) and to learn *from* the global South instead of following the common, patronising pattern of 'them' learning from 'us'. This article therefore endorses the argument made by McCloskey that 'development NGOs need to adopt a more overtly political role in society and align themselves more strategically with civil society groups that share their vision for a more egalitarian and just society' (2011).

The article began with an example drawn from the Corrib Gas saga, and will end with another. Development organisations are acutely aware of the phenomenon of the ongoing 'enclosure of the commons' in the global South, including the opening up of sectors that were (typically) not previously subject to market forces - education, health, transport, water supply, and public services in general (Harvey, 2003). The structural adjustment programmes imposed on Africa, Asia, Latin America and the former Soviet Union through the auspices of the World Bank and IMF were key mechanisms of this transformation. And now the process extends to life forms themselves - genetically modified plants, even the human genome itself, an enclosure movement in which the World Trade Organisation (WTO), through its protection of the 'intellectual property' of corporations, plays a vital role (Shiva, 2007). Many development NGOs devote considerable time and effort to trying to educate Irish people about these trends and their negative consequences, and urging Irish people to take action against them. But those efforts are inevitably limited by the perception that these things, awful as they are, are happening to other people in other places.

But the Corrib Gas affair brings these concerns much closer to home. The 'new disposessions' - including the commodification of life itself - generate revulsion and a fierce energy to 'reclaim the commons'; this, among other things, is at the heart of the opposition to the project, a feeling that certain things should *not* be for sale. Fisherman and protestor Pat O'Donnell (who, like Willie Corduff, has been imprisoned and assaulted) explains his refusal to accept money from Shell to stop fishing in Broadhaven Bay:

"The sea was there for me all along, I'd like it to be there for my children, you know? And for me to put a price on letting them f\*\*\*\*\*s in now, let it be a million or more, it's not up to me, leave it, I'll be gone out of here, God only knows when, but it cannot be said that I destroyed what nature, what God left us" (Storey, 2010).

By integrating Pat O'Donnell's experience into development education work, Irish development organisations could make the experience of the global South more readily accessible to Irish people and also allow them to feel a real relationship with people in the global South - as joint participants in common struggle. One world, one pain, one struggle.

## References

- Afri (2010) 'The IMF and Ireland: What we can Learn from the Global South', December 2010, available: [http://www.dublinopinion.com/downloads/Afri\\_Report\\_on\\_EU\\_IMF\\_Loan\\_Deal.pdf](http://www.dublinopinion.com/downloads/Afri_Report_on_EU_IMF_Loan_Deal.pdf), (accessed 6 December 2010).
- Harvey, D (2003) *The New Imperialism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Klein, N (2007) *The Shock Doctrine: the Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, London: Penguin Press.
- Lapavistas, C (2011) 'Support the Campaign to Audit Europe's Public Debt', *Guardian*, 3 March 2011.
- McCloskey, S (2011) 'Rising to the Challenge: Development Education, NGOs and the Urgent Need for Social Change' in *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring 2011.
- McWilliams, D (2011) 'Claim the Moral High Ground', 7 March 2011, available: <http://www.davidmcwilliams.ie/2011/03/07/claim-the-moral-high-ground>, (accessed 7 December 2010).
- O'Toole, F (2011) 'Coalition Offering Love Potion and a Chastity Belt', *Irish Times*, 8 March 2011.
- Shiva, V (ed.) (2007) *Manifestos on the Future of Food and Seed*, Brooklyn: South End Press.
- Siggins, L (2010) *Once Upon a Time in the West*, London: Transworld Publishing.
- Sitrin, M (ed.) (2006) *Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina*, Oakland: AK Press.
- Storey, A (2010) 'Totalitarian Capitalism, Economic Crisis and Utopian Visions', unpublished paper.
- Storey, A (2011) 'Call for Debt Audit', *Progressive-Economy@TASC*, 4 March 2011, available: <http://www.progressive-economy.ie/2011/03/guest-post-by-andy-storey-call-for-debt.html>.

## APPENDIX 1: CENTRE FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION

### About us

The Centre for Global Education was established in 1986 to provide education services that enhance awareness of international development issues. Its central remit is to provide learning that will enable individuals and organisations to address the causes of poverty, inequality and injustice at local and global levels. The Centre's resources and training programmes enable learners to understand the cultural, economic, social and political influences on our lives that result from our growing interdependence with other countries and societies. They also provide the skills, values, knowledge and understanding necessary to facilitate action that will contribute to poverty eradication both locally and globally.

### The Centre for Global Education's main aims are:

- To act as a resource for research and education on global issues;
- To support the work of groups and organisations that foster social and economic equality at all levels;
- To facilitate networking and co-operation with relevant agencies and groups;
- To provide training and resources on development issues;
- To encourage the use of development education methodologies to bring about change at a local and global level;
- To network with partner organisations that share our values and commitment to social justice and equality.

The Centre for Global Education houses a Resource Base that carries a range of resources on international development issues including teaching resources for use in schools, tertiary education, the minority ethnic, youth and community sectors.

### The Centre's resource base contains:

- Teaching resources;
- Research facilities;
- Documentaries and films on development;
- National and international periodicals on development issues;
- A comprehensive book collection.

**The Centre's current activities include:**

- The delivery of teacher training that supports classroom practice in global education;
- The publication of a bi-annual, peer reviewed, journal titled *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*;
- The provision of education services to children in the Gaza Strip, Palestine that supplements their education and offers psycho-social support;
- The regular organisation of workshops, seminars and conferences on global issues.

**Contact details**

For further information on the Centre for Global Education please contact:

Information Officer  
Centre for Global Education  
9 University Street  
Belfast  
BT7 1FY

|             |                                                                                                                   |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tel:        | (0044) 2890 241 879                                                                                               |
| E-mail:     | <a href="mailto:info@centreforglobaleducation.com">info@centreforglobaleducation.com</a>                          |
| Web Site:   | <a href="http://www.centreforglobaleducation.com">www.centreforglobaleducation.com</a>                            |
| Facebook:   | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/centreforglobaleducation">https://www.facebook.com/centreforglobaleducation</a> |
| Twitter:    | <a href="https://twitter.com/CGEbelfast">https://twitter.com/CGEbelfast</a>                                       |
| E-bulletin: | <a href="http://www.centreforglobaleducation.com/ebulletin">http://www.centreforglobaleducation.com/ebulletin</a> |

## APPENDIX 2: *POLICY AND PRACTICE* EDITORIAL GROUP AND INTERNATIONAL EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS

### EDITORIAL GROUP

**Carlos Bruen**

Researcher, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) and a PhD candidate, Institute of Social Psychology, London School of Economics

**Audrey Bryan**

Lecturer in Sociology and Citizenship Education, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra

**Anne Kinsella**

Librarian, Kimmage Development Studies Centre

**Ben Mallon**

PhD researcher and Irish Research Council Scholar, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra

**Gerard McCann**

Senior Lecturer and Module Co-ordinator in International Studies, St Mary's University College, Belfast

**Niamh Gaynor**

Lecturer in Development in the School of Law and Government, Dublin City University

**Paul Hainsworth**

Country Coordinator on Indonesia and Timor-Leste for Amnesty International UK

**Stephen McCloskey**

Director of the Centre for Global Education and Editor of *Policy and Practice*

**Su-ming Khoo**

Lecturer in the School of Political Science and Sociology, NUI Galway

## INTERNATIONAL EDITORIAL BOARD

### **Doug Bourn**

Director of the Development Education Research Centre, Institute of Education, University of London

### **Linda Briskman**

Professor of Human Rights at Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia

### **Vanessa de Oliveira Andreotti**

Canada Research Chair in Race, Inequalities and Global Change at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

### **James Goodman**

Associate Professor, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Technology, Sydney

### **Sarah Hunt**

Lecturer in International Development at the Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM), University of Manchester

### **David Jefferess**

Associate Professor of English at the University of British Columbia (Okanagan), Kelowna, Canada

### **Dip Kapoor**

Professor of International Education and Development at the University of Alberta, Canada

### **Lynette Shultz**

Associate Professor of Education and Co-Director, Centre for Global Citizenship and Research, University of Alberta, Canada

### **Andy Storey**

Lecturer at the School of Politics and International Relations, University College Dublin (UCD)

### **Roland Tormey**

Coordinator of the Teaching Support Centre at L'École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland

### **Ros Wade**

Professor in Education for Sustainability (EFS), London South Bank University (LSBU)